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ABSTRACT

The four largest racial and ethnic minorities--African Americans, Hispanics, Asians/Pacific Islanders, and American Indians--accounted for 25 percent of the U.S. population in 1992. By 2050, these minorities may account for 47 percent of the U.S. population. The U.S. minority population is also becoming more diverse because of high rates of immigration, a younger age structure, and higher fertility among some minority groups. This report compares the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of these four racial and ethnic minorities with each other and with the majority non-Hispanic white population. While, on average, minorities tend to lag behind whites on most measures of success, there are many who are achieving college degrees, high-status jobs, and high incomes. The increasing numbers of minorities will continue to add racial and ethnic diversity to our national character--and may prompt a reassessment of race and minority status. (Author)

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America's Minorities— The Demographics of Diversity

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America's Minorities— The Demographics of Diversity

by William P. O'Hare

The author wishes to thank Roderick Harrison, Juanita Tamayo Lott, Martha Farnsworth Riche, Larry Shinagawa, Matthew Snipp, and Rafael Valdivieso for providing thoughtful comments and suggestions on an early draft of this report.

The United States is undergoing a transition from a predominately white population rooted in Western culture to a society composed of diverse racial and ethnic minorities. By the middle of the 21st century, today's minorities will comprise nearly one-half of all Americans. These demographic changes are leading Americans to forge a new image of the nation and of the future.

The rapid increase in minorities has been accompanied by a shift in the racial and ethnic composition of the U.S. minority population. In 1950, African Americans were about 75 percent of all minorities. By 1990, blacks were less than half of all minorities. By 2010, Hispanics are expected to surpass blacks in number and become the nation's largest minority group.

Racial and ethnic minorities are becoming more diverse because of shifts in the national origins of Asian and Hispanic immigrants as well as growing socioeconomic differences within minority groups. The number of minorities in the highest income brackets nearly doubled during the 1980s, for example, and more minority politicians are being elected to public office. The common image of all minorities as powerless and poor is not an accurate picture.

These demographic changes have important social implications. The growth of African-American, Hispanic, Asian, and American-Indian populations has diversified the racial and ethnic makeup of our schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods, fostering a new awareness of America's multiracial, multicultural heritage. But many Americans are divided on the long-term effects of the growing diversity. Some see the rapid growth of minorities as a key to the revitalization of America and a logical continuation of our "melting pot" tradition. Others see the rapid increase in racial and ethnic minorities as an undesirable departure from America's predominately European heritage. Discussions on this topic sometimes become heated because the increase in the minority populations is closely linked to important policy issues relating to immigration, affirmative action, and education reform.

The rapid growth and increasing diversity of America's minority populations are among the most important demographic changes in the past few decades. Yet many Americans have inaccurate perceptions of the basic demographic facts. For example, a 1990 Gallup Poll found that the average American estimated that 32 percent of the U.S. population was African American, and 21 percent Hispanic.[1] Yet the 1990 Census revealed that blacks were 12 percent, and Hispanics 9 percent, of the population. Such misperceptions may arise from the geographic concentration of minorities—generally in large urban areas, and in specific states such as California, Texas, and New York.

3

Many white Americans living in the country's heartland have little contact with minorities. This may also help explain why many Americans—according to public opinion polls—believe that racial discrimination is no longer a problem. Numerous studies continue to contradict this view by documenting discrimination against individuals in employment, housing, and other areas because of their race or ethnicity.[2]

To the rest of the world, the United States is a grand and daring experiment. No country has ever succeeded in blending so many people of different races and different cultures.

To the rest of the world, the United States is a grand and daring experiment. No country has ever succeeded in blending so many people of different races and different cultures. In a time when racial and ethnic rivalries are creating misery around the globe, how well Americans handle their transition to a multiracial society has implications that extend far beyond our borders.

Although the pace of this demographic transition is astounding, it is occurring remarkably smoothly. Tensions build up among racial and ethnic groups and sometimes erupt into serious confrontations, as in the Los Angeles riots of May 1992. Yet most of these confrontations are minor compared with the violence among racial and ethnic groups in some countries. Recent events in Germany, for example, have highlighted the conflict between native-born Germans and immigrants.[3] Even Japan, usually viewed as a remarkably homogeneous country, is experiencing ethnic discord, albeit less violent than in many other places.[4] Ethnic and religious differences have led to full-scale war in regions of former Yugoslavia.

It is to our advantage to view the growing diversity of the U.S. population in an international context because the rise of a global economy is bringing countries of the world closer together. The United States is geographically positioned to serve the growing Latin American market to the South, its traditional European market to its East, and the burgeoning Asian market to its West. If Americans so choose, our increasingly multicultural population can enhance our ability to serve the global marketplace. With ties to all the regions of the world, America's racial and ethnic minorities can help American businesses understand the needs and preferences of people in other countries.

This *Population Bulletin* offers readers a chance to understand America's minorities in comparison with one another, and with the white population, across a host of demographic dimensions. The changes reported here have occurred so rapidly that perspectives on minority issues that were developed as recently as a generation ago may already be out-of-date. As Americans reassess how we view ourselves as a nation, and how we view our future, we will no doubt express contradictory views and arrive at different positions on public policy issues. Resolving those differences will be easier if we share a basic understanding of the current demographic reality of America's minority populations.

Historical Position of Racial and Ethnic Minorities

While contemporary race relations contain elements of stress and friction, they are probably no more than those among European groups 100 years ago.[5] Clashes between Germans, Irish, Italians, Poles, and other European groups during the 19th and early 20th centuries are well documented. Many suffered discrimination in employment, housing, and other areas. But most European immigrants and their descendants—who accounted for four-fifths of the U.S. population in 1900—eventually achieved full participation in U.S. society.

This was not the case for the groups most Americans now think of as "minority." African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanics, and Asians have all experienced institutionalized or state sanctioned discrimination—as well as social exclusion. The legal oppression of African-American slaves is well documented, as is the effect of the "Jim Crow" laws enacted after the U.S. Civil War. Before 1965, discriminatory voter-registration laws prevented all but 7

percent of Mississippi's African Americans from registering to vote.[7] As recently as the 1960s, some school districts maintained separate schools for black and white students.

American Indians have a long history of legal oppression. Time and again, Indians were forcibly removed from their homelands in accordance with treaties imposed by the U.S. government and were often compelled to live on government-defined reservations where there was little chance of prospering.[8]

Mexican Americans in Southwestern states lost property and political rights as Anglo Americans began to move into the region in the late 1800s. As late as the 1940s, local ordinances in some Texas cities blocked Mexican Americans from owning real estate or voting. Also, Mexican Americans were required to attend segregated public schools in many jurisdictions before 1950. Even in areas where schools were more integrated, Latino students were often treated unfairly.[9]

Most Asians in the United States today come from recent immigrant families, but many Asian Americans can trace their family's American history back more than 150 years. Much of this period was marked by anti-Asian laws and discrimination. The 1879 California Constitution barred the hiring of Chinese workers and the federal Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 halted the entry of most Chinese immigrants until 1943.[10] Americans of Japanese ancestry were interned in camps during World War II by an executive order signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.[11] It was not until 1952 that Japanese immigrants were granted the right to become naturalized U.S. citizens. While today's minority groups have many differences, they all have suffered, and to some extent continue to suffer economic, political, and social disadvantages because of their racial or ethnic identity.

Some analysts assume that the racial and ethnic minorities of contemporary America will follow the path of European immigrant groups and eventually assimilate into the wider society, losing their minority status. Others point out that African Americans and American Indians remain at the lowest rungs of society 200 years into the "melting pot" experience. They caution also that social and economic conditions are so different now that today's minorities have more limited opportunities for social mobility than did the European-American groups.

Minority Status

Determining who is a minority is largely a matter of history, politics, and judgement—both social and political. All Americans are members of some minority group because no single ancestry group accounts for more than half our population. Population characteristics other than race and ethnicity—such as age, gender, or religious preference—are sometimes used to designate minority status. However, race and Hispanic origin are the characteristics used most often to define the minority and majority populations in contemporary American society.

"Minority" is also a statistical designation. How minorities are defined in official statistics collected and published by government agencies is often driven by political considerations or by specific laws and regulations.

Currently, the government gathers statistics for four major racial and ethnic minority groups: 1) blacks, or African Americans; 2) Asians and Pacific Islanders; 3) American Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts; and 4) Hispanics, also referred to as Latinos. These four groups are the largest and most widely recognized minority groups and are the focus of this report.*

Today's minority groups all have suffered, and to some extent continue to suffer economic, political, and social disadvantages because of their racial or ethnic identity.

* The terms black and African American are used interchangeably in this report, as are the terms Hispanic and Latino, and American Indian and Native American. Except where indicated, the term Asian refers to Asians and Pacific Islanders, and American Indian refers to American Indians, Aleuts, and Eskimos. The term white refers to non-Hispanic whites except where otherwise specified.

Box 1

Defining Race and Ethnicity

An individual's race and ethnicity are socially, not scientifically defined. In the United States, people are asked to identify their own race on government forms and surveys. In Canada, ethnicity is defined by an individual's ancestry. In other countries, religion or language distinguish the major ethnic groups.

The race and ethnic categories used in population statistics reflect contemporary social and political realities. The terms and categories have shifted over time in the United States. In 1993, the U.S. Census Bureau and most federal agencies collect data for four racial categories (white, African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, and American Indian/Eskimo/Aleut). A fifth "other race" category is sometimes included. Data are also collected for two ethnic categories: Hispanic and non-Hispanic. These categories conform to guidelines for government statistical reporting established by a 1978 directive from the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The categories and definitions are as follows:

Race

White: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East.

Black or African American: A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.

Asian or Pacific Islander: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands.

American Indian, Eskimo or Aleut: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.

Other: Individuals who do not identify with any of the above categories.

Ethnicity

Hispanic: A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

Non-Hispanic: Persons who are not of Hispanic origin.

Race and ethnic definitions overlap because Hispanics may be of any race. This overlap confuses many individuals, and many Hispanics do not identify with any of the four race categories set out in the OMB directive. In the 1990 Census, for example, 43 percent of Hispanics classified their race as "other race," that is, not white, black, Asian, or American Indian. And, most people (96 percent) in the "other race" category were also of Hispanic origin

The categories and labels used in the decennial censuses shown in the table reflect the growing diversity of the U.S. population as well as the social and political climate of the time. At the time of the 1900 Census, the Japanese and Chinese were the only sizeable group of Asians living in the United States. In 1990, nine distinct Asian populations and a catchall "other Asian/Pacific Islander" category were listed on the census questionnaire.

Persons of mixed racial parentage—a tiny but growing group of Americans—present a challenge to the current system. Because race is self-reported, individuals are free to choose the racial category with which they most closely identify. A woman with a Chinese mother and white father, for example, may say she is white if she identifies most closely with her white relatives. Alternatively, she may choose Chinese, if she grew up speaking her mother's language and associating mainly with her mother's family. She may also select Asian on one form, white on another—which confounds the analysis of racial statistics.

A post-enumeration survey (PES) conducted after the 1990 Census found

that some U.S. residents were reported as one race in the census and a different race in the PES. White and black responses in the census and PES were consistent about 97 percent of the time; Asians and Pacific Islanders and American Indians about 80 percent of the time.

Statistics on minority births are also affected by classification changes. The National Center for Health Statistics, which records birth and death data for the United States, changed the way a newborn's race is recorded beginning with 1989. Previously, newborns were assigned a race through a complex set of rules regarding the race of the mother and father. Generally, an infant was classified as nonwhite if either parent was not white. Beginning with 1989, birth statistics are tabulated by the race of the infant's mother. This decreases the number of minority births because most mixed-race births are born to white mothers and nonwhite fathers.

Reference

Juanita Tamayo Lott, "Do United States Racial/Ethnic Categories Still Fit?" *Population Today* (Washington, DC: Population Reference Bureau, January 1993): 6-9.

Race and Ethnic Categories Used in Selected Decennial Censuses

Census	1860	1890	1900	1970	1990
Race	White	White	White	White	White
	Black	Black	Black (Negro descent)	Negro or Black	Black or Negro
	Mulatto	Mulatto	Chinese	Japanese	American Indian
		Quadroon[2]	Japanese	Chinese	Eskimo
		Octoroon[3]	Indian	Filipino	Aleut
		Chinese		Hawaiian	Chinese
		Japanese		Korean	Filipino
		Indian		Indian [Amer.]	Hawaiian
				Other	Korean
					Vietnamese
					Japanese
					Asian Indian
					Samoan
					Guamanian
					Other API[4]
					Other race
Hispanic Origin				Mexican	Mexican or Chicano
				Puerto Rican	or Mexican-Am.
				Cuban	Puerto Rican
				Central/So. American	Cuban
				Other Spanish	Other Spanish/
					Hispanic

[1] Three-eighths to five-eighths black.
[2] One quarter black.
[3] One eighth black.
[4] Asian and Pacific Islander.

Note: Prior to 1970, census enumerators wrote in the race of individuals using the groups cited above. In the 1970 and subsequent censuses, respondents and enumerators filled in circles corresponding to the category with which the respondent most closely identified. Persons choosing other race or Indian were asked to write in the race or Indian tribe.

If the American minority population lived in an independent country, it would be the 13th largest in the world—more populous than Great Britain, France, Italy, or Spain.

The statistics most often available present some difficult problems for analysts trying to compare minority groups with the white majority population. First, the categories are not mutually exclusive. Because Hispanic origin is considered an ethnic identity rather than a race (see Box 1, page 6), data for any racial group may also include Hispanics. A slim majority of Hispanics classified themselves as white in the 1990 Census, the source of much of our information. Some 43 percent of Hispanics listed their race as "other;" 3 percent of Hispanics reported their race as black (primarily Puerto Ricans); 1 percent Asian (primarily Filipinos); and 1 percent American Indian.

While the overlapping race and ethnicity definitions affect national figures only slightly, they skew statistics from areas with large Hispanic populations, such as Los Angeles or San Antonio. In such areas, comparisons of survey or census data for whites and minorities do not really reflect differences between these groups and the white non-Hispanic population. In this publication, data are given separately for non-Hispanics in each racial category (white, African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, and American Indian) when they are available.

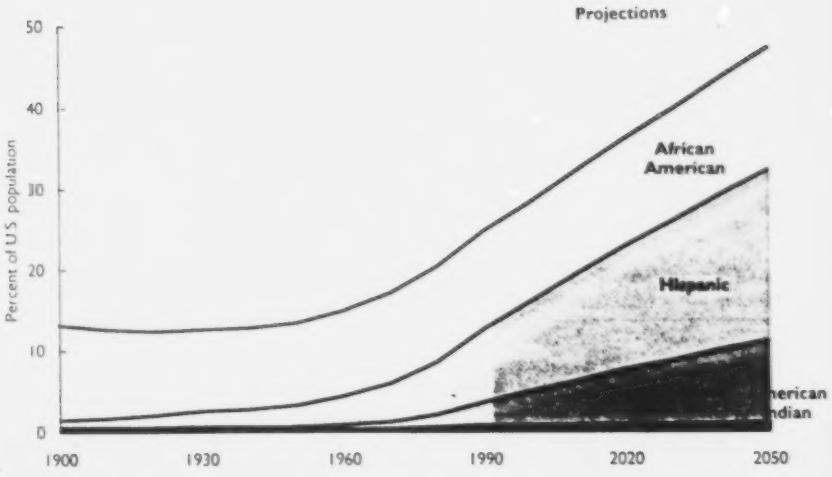
The Asian/Pacific Islander category poses additional difficulties for analysts. Although many Asians identify with a distinctly Asian *American* cultural background,[11] many others have little in common except for ties to the same world region. They include people from locations as disparate as Samoa and Manchuria. They subscribe to different religions, speak different languages, even use different alphabets. They may even have been adversaries in their homelands. Hostility may also arise between long-time and recent residents of the same ethnic group.

Another technical problem in comparing statistics on minorities is the relatively small number of Asians/Pacific Islanders and American Indians and Alaska Natives. Many common socioeconomic and demographic measures are not available for such small population groups. Survey-based measures for Asians and especially for American Indians are calculated from a small pool of respondents, and must be interpreted with caution.

Because of immigration and relatively high fertility, Hispanics are projected to be the largest U.S. minority within 20 years.

Figure 1

Share of Minorities in the U.S. Population, 1900 to 2050



Source: Jeffrey S. Passel and Barry Edmonston, "Immigration and Race: Recent Trends in Immigration to the United States (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, 1992), table 3, and Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports* P-25, no. 1092 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1992), table 1.

Size and Growth of Minorities

The combined population of the four minority groups was estimated at 64.3 million in 1992. If all these Americans lived in an independent country, it would be the 13th largest in the world—more populous than Great Britain, France, Italy, or Spain.

For most of this century the minority population was overwhelmingly African American, and it comprised a relatively stable share of the total U.S. population. Between 1900 and 1960, the minority share of the total population edged upward only slightly, from 13.1 to 14.9 percent (see Figure 1). The *number* of minorities grew significantly during this period, however, surging from just under 10 million to nearly 21 million. But the non-Hispanic white population grew just as rapidly because of high birth rates and immigration from Europe.

Between 1960 and 1990, the minority population tripled in size, reaching 61 million. The minority share of the U.S. population grew to one-fourth, as new waves of immigration from non-European countries, higher birth rates among minorities, and a relatively young age structure accelerated the growth rates of these groups. Meanwhile, the non-Hispanic white population grew slowly as birth rates fell and European immigration dwindled. Minorities increased by 40 percent between 1980 and 1992, compared with a 6 percent growth in the non-Hispanic white population.

Asians and Pacific Islanders had the fastest rate of growth during the 1980s and early 1990s, reaching nearly 8 million by 1992. The number of non-Hispanic Asians grew by 124 percent over 12 years (see Table 1, page 10). Numerically, however, Hispanics increased most. Between 1980 and 1992, 9.5 million Hispanics were added to the population, nearly as many as the 10 million non-Hispanic whites added. The 31 percent increase among American Indians was also remarkable considering that little of the gain could have come from immigration and that it cannot be accounted for by natural increase. Some of the increase may reflect improved census coverage in 1990 (see Box 2), but

Table 1

Growth of U.S. Population by Race and Ethnicity, 1980-1992

	Population		Persons added	Percent change
	1980	1992	(number/percent)	1980-1992
	Numbers in thousands			
Total U.S.	226,546	254,922	28,375 / 100	12.5
Non-Hispanic white	180,603	180,604	0.001 / .35	5.5
Total minorities	45,943	64,318	18,375 / 65	40.0
Non-Hispanic				
African American	26,092	30,372	4,280 / 15	9.4
Asian/Pacific Islander	1,555	5,937	4,386 / 15	235
American Indian, Eskimo/Aleut	433	873	440 / 2	30.7
Hispanic	14,604	21,136	9,532 / 34	65.3

Note: 1980 total includes 294,000 people of other races.

Source: 1980 figures from U.S. Bureau of the Census, *1980 Census of Population, General Social and Economic Characteristics*, PC80-1-C1, table 75, December, 1983. 1992 figures from U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports* P-25, no. 1092 (1992), table 2.

it may also reveal a trend—perhaps among individuals of mixed parentage—toward reclaiming American-Indian heritage. That is, a percentage of the people who identified themselves as Indian in the 1990 Census had not claimed Indian heritage in the previous census. A similar increase in the American-Indian population occurred between the 1970 and 1980 censuses. Some analysts attributed this increase to a renewed interest in claiming Indian ancestry.[12]

The African-American population had the slowest growth rate among minorities. The number of blacks increased by 16 percent between 1980 and 1992. Yet, blacks increased at nearly *three times* the rate for whites. Their numbers expanded from 26 to 30 million.

Box 2

Undercount of Minorities in the 1990 U.S. Census

The U.S. Census attempts to enumerate every U.S. resident every 10 years, but a small fraction of the population is always missed by enumerators. Minorities are more likely than non-Hispanic whites to be undercounted in the final tabulation. While about 60.6 million Hispanics, and non-Hispanic blacks, Asians, and American Indians were counted in the 1990 Census, the true number was estimated at 63.0 million, after adjusting for the undercount. Young blacks living in inner-city areas, illegal immigrants, Indians living on reservations, and non-English-speaking minorities are among the groups most likely to be missed by the census as well as by other surveys and administrative records used to derive demographic estimates. In the 1990 Census, 4 to 5 percent of African Americans, Hispanics, and American Indians were missed, compared with about 1 to 2 percent of Asians and whites.

The differential undercount between whites and minorities has been observed in every census since 1940, and over the past two decades it has become a contentious political issue. While the undercount is small relative to the total U.S. population, it can distort the size and racial makeup of specific areas. Some cities and states with large populations of poor minorities feel they are not getting their fair share of public funds and political power because of the census undercount, and are suing the Department of Commerce to force an adjustment of the census figures. Similar suits were filed after the 1980 Census, but failed to change the official policy of not adjusting census results.

Percent of Minorities Missed in the 1990 Census

	Total	Male	Female
Total U.S.	1.6	1.9	1.3
African American	4.4	4.9	4.0
Hispanic	5.0	5.5	4.4
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.3	3.4	1.2
American Indian*	4.5	5.2	3.9

* Includes Eskimos and Aleuts

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Assessment of Accuracy of Adjusted Versus Unadjusted 1990 Census Base for Use in Intercensal Estimates, Report of the Committee on Adjustment of Postcensal Estimates," August 7, 1992, table 2.

Together, these four minority groups accounted for 65 percent of the 28 million people added to the U.S. population between 1980 and 1992, significantly more than the 53 percent of growth minorities contributed to the total population in the 1970s.

Increasing Diversity

Just a few generations ago, the vast majority of America's racial and ethnic minorities were African American. Although still the most numerous of these groups, blacks are now less than half of all minorities and their share is declining. The "new minorities," as Asians and Hispanics are sometimes called, are growing much more rapidly than blacks or American Indians. And, specific Hispanic and Asian national-origin groups are growing at very different rates. Americans of mixed-race parentage also contribute to this diversity (see Box 3, page 14).

Hispanics, with a 1992 population of 24 million, are the second largest minority, accounting for 38 percent of America's minority population. Asians accounted for 12 percent of minorities. American Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts made up 3 percent of the minority population.

African Americans

As a group, African Americans appear more homogeneous than the other minorities because most are descended from families that have been in the United States for many generations. Yet they too encompass immigrant groups from Africa and the Caribbean with very different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. While the immigrant component of the African-American population is quite small relative to Hispanics and Asians, many African immigrant groups swelled in size over the decade. The number of Ethiopians more than quadrupled, while the number of Ghanians grew by 175 percent, Kenyans by 167 percent, and Nigerians by 123 percent. Nigerians remained the largest African immigrant group during the 1980s, numbering 60,000 in 1990.

The Caribbean, however, is the source of most U.S. immigrants of African descent. Severe political and economic problems in Haiti in recent years helped boost the number of Haitians in the United States from 92,000 in 1980 to 229,000 in 1990. In addition, the 1990 Census counted 343,000 American residents from Jamaica, and 119,000 from Trinidad and Tobago. And, many black Hispanics were undoubtedly among the 357,000 U.S. residents from the Dominican Republic counted in the 1990 Census.[13] The influx of Caribbean immigrants helped raise the number of black Hispanics from 391,000 to 1.3 million between 1980 and 1992.

The increasing racial and ethnic diversity of Americans may force a shift in our perceptions of minority status.

Table 2

Growth of Hispanic and Asian and Pacific Islander Populations, 1980-1990

	Population		Change 1980-1990	
	1980	1990	Number	Percent
	Numbers in thousands			
Hispanic				
Total	14,609	22,354	7,745	53
Mexican	8,740	13,496	4,755	54
Puerto Rican	2,014	2,728	714	35
Cuban	803	1,044	241	30
Other Hispanic	3,051	5,086	2,035	67
Asian/Pacific Islander				
Total*	3,726	7,274	3,548	95
Chinese	806	1,645	839	104
Filipino	775	1,407	632	82
Japanese	701	848	147	21
Asian Indian	362	815	454	126
Korean	355	799	444	125
Vietnamese	262	615	353	135
Hawaiian	167	211	44	27
Cambodian*	16	147	131	819
Laotian*	48	149	101	210
Thai*	45	91	46	102
Hmong*	5	90	85	1,700
Pakistani*	16	81	65	406
Samoan	42	63	21	50
Guamanian	32	49	17	53
Indonesian*	10	29	19	190
Other Asian/Pacific Islander	86	233	147	171

*The 1980 data for these groups are from sample tabulations and are subject to sampling variability. All other 1980 data and the 1990 data in this table are based on 100-percent tabulations.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Press Release CB91-215, June 12, 1991.

Hispanics

The nation's Hispanic population primarily includes people who trace their ancestry to Spanish-speaking countries throughout Latin America. Census data are published for four major Hispanic groups: Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and a catchall "other Hispanics" category. The 1990 Census counted nearly 14 million Mexican Americans, 3 million Puerto Ricans (living on the U.S. mainland), 1 million Cubans, and 5 million Hispanics from other areas (see Table 2). Newly arrived immigrants from Central and South America make up a large portion of the burgeoning "other Hispanics" group, which grew by 67 percent between 1980 and 1990. In 1990, 1.3 million Hispanic Americans were from Central America, 1 million were from South America, and 0.5 million were from the Dominican Republic.

Asian Americans

Asian Americans are arguably the most diverse minority group. Among the 7.3 million Asian Americans counted in the 1990 Census, six groups number a half million or more (Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Asian Indian, Korean, and Vietnamese). Eighty-four percent of all Asian Americans are in one of these six groups. Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders accounted for only 5 percent of the 1990 Asian and Pacific Islander population.

Immigration during the 1980s helped to double the number of Chinese, Asian Indians, Koreans, and Vietnamese over the decade. Filipinos nearly doubled in number, rising from 0.8 to 1.4 million. In sharp contrast, Japanese Americans—with low immigration levels—and Hawaiians—a native American group—grew relatively slowly over the period.

Native Americans

The American Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut minority population also combines peoples with different pasts and disparate presents. They are linked because their civilizations were thriving here before Europeans and others began to settle the continent. The 1990 Census counted 1.9 million American Indians, including 148,000 Hispanic Indians, along with 57,000 Eskimos and 24,000 Aleuts. American Indians claim membership to over 500 tribes, but one-half of all Indians identify with one of the eight largest tribes.[1] The Cherokee, Navajo, Chippewa, or Sioux tribes are the largest, claiming four out of ten American Indians, as shown in Table 3.

Higher birth rates among Indians, better census reporting, and perhaps a resurgence of ethnic pride helped increase the American-Indian population by 28 percent between the 1980 and 1990 Censuses. The Navajo, Choctaw, Chippewa, and Apache grew by 38 to 64 percent over the decade, for example, and the count of Aleuts increased by 68 percent, far more than could be accounted for by natural increase.

Sources of Population Change

Immigration accounted for most of the growth of the minority population during the 1980s. Higher fertility among minority women than non-Hispanic white women was the other major cause of the faster growth rate. Some minorities also have slightly higher death rates, especially at specific ages and from certain causes, which leaves an imprint on both the health and demographic profile of the U.S. population. Together these demographic variables both affect and are affected by the relatively youthful age profile of U.S. minorities.

Immigration

Immigration is fueling much of the growth in the minority population. During the last 30 years, over three-quarters of all immigrants entering the United States have belonged to one of the four major minority groups (see Figure 2). During the 1980s, immigration accounted for about half of the growth among Hispanics and nearly three-quarters of the growth among Asian Americans.

The forces propelling immigrants to leave their countries and come to the United States are varied. Some come to escape deplorable conditions in their native countries. Others are attracted by economic opportunities in the United States. Still others join families already living here. And while most come legally, many slip across the border without proper documentation, or remain in the United States long after their student or tourist visas have expired.

Recent immigration from Asia and the Pacific Islands reflects two major streams. One stream flows from the Asian countries that already have large communities here, for example, China, the Philippines, and Korea. Many of these immigrants are well educated and gained entry under the employment provisions of the immigration laws.

The second stream is composed of immigrants and refugees from Southeast Asia—Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Their arrival is tied to U.S. policies

Table 3

Growth of Aleuts, Eskimos, and Major American-Indian Tribes, 1980-1990

	Population		Persons added[a]	Percent change[a]
	1980	1990		
	Numbers in thousands			
Total	1,534	1,959	425	28
Aleut	14	24	10	68
Eskimo	42	57	15	36
American Indian	479	878	400	27
Cherokee	232	308	76	33
Navajo	159	219	61	38
Chippewa	74	104	30	41
Sioux	79	103	25	31
Choctaw	50	82	32	64
Pueblo	43	53	10	24
Apache	36	50	14	40
Iroquois	38	49	11	28
Other tribes[b]	769	910	141	18

Note: The 1980 data are from sample tabulations and are subject to sampling variability. The 1990 data are from the 100-percent census tabulations. The data include persons who also specified Hispanic origin. Race and tribal identification were self-reported on census forms and may differ from counts from tribal rolls or other sources.

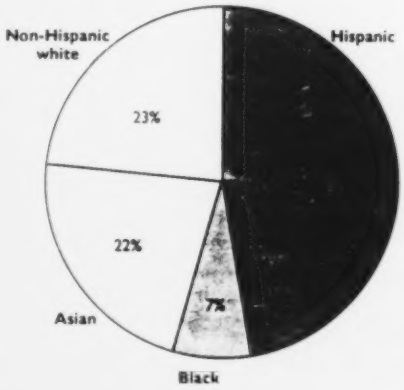
[a] Based on unrounded numbers.

[b] Includes at least 100 other major tribes, over 300 tribes with less than 1,000 people, and tribe not reported.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Press Releases CB91-215 (June 12, 1991) and CB92-244 (November 14, 1992), and C. Matthew Snipp, *American Indians: First of This Land* (New York: Russell Sage, 1989), table A1.1.

Figure 2

Race and Ethnicity of U.S. Immigrants, 1960 to 1990



Note: Percentages do not add to 100 due to rounding.

Source: Jeffrey S. Passel and Barry Edmonston, "Immigration and Race: Recent Trends in Immigration to the United States" (Washington, DC: The Urban Institute, 1992), table 9.

Box 3

Americans with Multiracial and Multiethnic Backgrounds—A New Minority Group?

While African Americans, Asians, Native Americans, and Hispanics are classified as the primary minority groups, many Americans with multiracial or multiethnic parentage do not really fit into any of these groups. There is no accurate count of these Americans because the categories used on most government forms and surveys record only one race or ethnic group. While the numbers are probably small relative to the total U.S. population, the upward trend in interracial marriages and births suggests that the number of mixed-race Americans will continue to increase, eventually forcing a change in the way racial statistics are collected, and possibly a shift in the way race is perceived by Americans.

For much of U.S. history, most states had laws prohibiting marriage between individuals of different races. The last of these laws (in Virginia and South Carolina) were struck down by a U.S. Supreme Court ruling in 1967.[1] Between 1970 and 1980, the number of recorded interracial married couples tripled, from 300,000 to over 900,000 and marriages between Hispanics and non-Hispanics grew from 600,000 to 900,000.[2] In 1991, there were an estimated 1 million interracial married couples and 1.2 million Hispanics married to non-Hispanics.

Mixed-race marriages made up about 2 percent of the 53 million married couples in 1991. About 7 percent of marriages involving an African American were interracial. However, one-quarter of those of other races (primarily Asian Americans) were married to someone outside their own race in 1991. And, just over one-fourth of married Hispanics had a non-Hispanic spouse in 1991.

The high intermarriage rates of Hispanics and Asians, coupled with their growing numbers, has led to a baby boom of mixed-race children. Although the large share of birth certificates missing the race or ethnic origin of a parent makes a complete count impossible, at least 118,000 babies were born to parents of different races in 1989, a nearly four-fold increase from the number recorded 20 years earlier. The true number is probably much higher because 600,000 birth certificates did not record the race of father in 1989.[3]

While mixed-race babies are less than 3 percent of all births nationally, they represented at least 13 percent of the children born to a nonwhite parent in 1989, and a much higher percentage among some groups. More than half the births to American-Indian parents, for example, had a mother or father of a different race, as did nearly one-third of births to Asian parents. Nearly one-fourth of the babies born to Hispanic parents of any race also had a non-Hispanic mother or father.

As we consider the policies we will need to guide us into the 21st century, new racial categories are likely to emerge to reflect the nation's increased racial and ethnic diversity.[4]

References

1. Paul R. Spickard, *Mixed Blood: Intermarriage and Ethnic Identity in Twentieth Century America* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989); and Joel Williamson, *New People: Miscegenation and Mulattoes in the United States* (New York: The Free Press, 1980).
2. Arlene R. Saluter, "Marital Status and Living Arrangements: March 1991," *Current Population Reports* P-20, no. 461 (April 1992), table E.
3. National Center for Health Statistics, *Vital Statistics of the United States: Natality* (various years), and unpublished data; and Susan Kalish, "Interracial Baby Boomlet in Progress?," *Population Today* (Washington, DC: Population Reference Bureau, December 1992): 1-2.
4. Juanita Tamayo Lott, "Do United States Racial/Ethnic Categories Still Fit?" *Population Today* (Washington, DC: Population Reference Bureau, January 1993): 6,9.

following the Vietnam War and the unstable political and economic conditions in their home countries. These immigrants tend to arrive with less education and fewer resources than other Asian immigrants; consequently, their experience here is very different.

Immigration from Africa and the Caribbean accounted for about one-sixth of black population growth during the 1980s.[15] Comparable 1990 figures for American Indians and Alaska Natives (Eskimos and Aleuts) are not available, but any immigration—most likely from Canada, Mexico, and Central America—probably contributed only a minimal share to the growth of this minority group over the decade.

High levels of immigration are expected to continue the relatively high rate of minority population growth. Current projections from the Census Bureau anticipate a net addition of 880,000 immigrants a year until 2050, composed of about 324,000 Hispanics, 323,000 non-Hispanic Asians, 174,000 non-Hispanic whites, and 60,000 non-Hispanic blacks. The compounding effects of annual immigration at these levels are behind the projected rise in the share of minorities in the population from 25 percent in 1990 to 47 percent in 2050. If net immigration had halted in 1991, non-Hispanic whites would account for over 62 percent of the population in 2050 and blacks would be the largest minority, according to the Census Bureau.

U.S. immigration laws are inextricably linked to minority issues, and raise many humanitarian and policy questions. Should we discourage certain groups from coming here? Try to slow the flow of immigrants to ease their absorption into U.S. society? Further shift U.S. immigration policy away from family reunification and toward increasing the share of immigrants with economic skills and financial resources to invest in our economy? Events outside Americans' control—population pressures, racial and ethnic strife in some countries, inadequate economic opportunities in others—will determine the origins and numbers of people who want to come to this country. But U.S. policies will determine how many and whom we will accept and, in part, reflect Americans' assessment of the effect of minorities on society.

U.S. immigration laws are inextricably linked to minority issues, and raise many humanitarian and policy questions.

Dev Wong/B Sipos

Minorities have higher fertility than non-Hispanic whites—one of the reasons for their faster population growth.

Higher Fertility

High fertility among minorities also contributed to rapid growth during the 1980s. Minorities accounted for 35 percent of the 4 million U.S. births in 1989, although they made up only 25 percent of the population. Some of the fertility difference between whites and minorities reflects the larger proportion of minority women in their childbearing ages, but most of it occurs because minority women have, on average, more children than white women.

American Indians and Alaska Natives have the highest fertility, according to Census Bureau estimates. In 1992, their total fertility rate (TFR, the total number of children a woman will have

Table 4

Fertility Rates for Racial and Ethnic Groups, 1992

Race/ethnicity	Total fertility rate*
Non-Hispanic	
White	1.9
African American	2.5
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.3
American Indian/Eskimo/Aleut	2.9
Hispanic	2.7

* The average number of children born per woman under current age-specific fertility rates.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports* P-25, no. 1092 (1992): table A.

Hispanic, black, and American-Indian women tend to have their first child at a younger age than do non-Hispanic white or Asian women—which contributes to a larger total family size.

given current birth rates) was estimated at 2.9, about one child more per woman than the rate for non-Hispanic whites (see Table 4). Hispanics, with a TFR of 2.7 children per woman, have the next highest fertility, followed by blacks (2.5) and Asians (2.3).

Hispanic, black, and American-Indian women tend to have their first child at a younger age than do non-Hispanic white or Asian women—which contributes to a larger total family size—and are also more likely to have a child before age 20. Overall, 13 percent of U.S. births were to teenage mothers in 1989. However, teenagers accounted for 23 percent of births among blacks that year; 20 percent among Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts; 17 percent among Hispanics; and 6 percent among Asians and Pacific Islanders.

Teen childbearing is associated with negative economic consequences for both mother and child. Women who have children while in their teens are less likely to finish high school, to be employed, or to earn high wages. However, teen childbearing accounts for one-fourth or less of all births to minority women. In general, African-American, Latino, and American-Indian birth rates peak when women are in their early 20s, while white and Asian birth rates are highest among women ages 25 to 29. Asian-American women actually postpone childbearing longer than white women. Nearly 44 percent of births to Asian women occurred to women over age 30 in 1989, compared with 32 percent among white women and less than 25 percent among African-American, American-Indian, and Hispanic women.[16]

Black and Latino babies are more likely than white babies to be born to an unmarried mother—another characteristic often associated with lower economic status and related problems.[17] Overall, 27 percent of U.S. births in 1989 occurred to unmarried women; the share was 36 percent among Hispanics, 66 percent among African Americans, and 16 percent among non-Hispanic white women.

Disparities in Health and Mortality

In addition to the economic drawbacks associated with being born to unmarried or very young mothers, many minority infants face a precarious health situation that begins before their birth. Because of a lack of health insurance, limited access to health facilities, or a host of other reasons, only about 60 percent of black, American-Indian, and Hispanic women reported receiving prenatal care during their first trimester of pregnancy in 1989. A larger share of Asian women (76 percent) and white women (79 percent) received first trimester prenatal care.[18]

African-American babies are much more likely to be born prematurely and to weigh less than the optimal birth weight. Thirteen percent of African-American babies born in 1989 were low birth-weight babies—that is, weighing less than 2,500 grams (about 5.5 pounds). In sharp contrast, about 6 percent of American-Indian, Hispanic, Asian, or white babies were low birth weight in 1989. Low birth weight is associated with a lower chance of surviving the first year of life and with many long-term health and developmental problems.[19] African Americans have higher infant mortality rates than other racial and ethnic groups—about twice the rates for Hispanics and American Indians, and more than three times the rates for Asians and whites.

Inadequate prenatal care, infant mortality, and other health problems

among a sizeable segment of the minority population stem in part from their limited access to medical care. Minorities are much less likely than whites to have health insurance. About 10 percent of non-Hispanic whites reported they had no health coverage in 1991, compared with 17 percent of Asians, 20 percent of African Americans and American Indians, and 33 percent of Hispanics.[20]

While health and mortality in general have improved for all Americans, minorities suffer higher mortality than whites from several causes of death that predominantly afflict young adults. Blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians are much more likely to die from homicide or AIDS than are whites. Homicide was the fourth most common cause of death for black and Hispanic men of all ages in 1989. It ranked sixth among American-Indian men, eighth among Asian men, and 11th among white men (including Hispanics). On the other hand, minority men are much less likely to die of automobile accidents, heart disease, and—except for American Indians—from suicide than are white men.

There are also clear racial differences in major causes of death among white and minority women. Death rates from diabetes for example—a disease exacerbated by poor nutrition and health care—are noticeably higher among black, Hispanic, and American-Indian women than among Asians or whites. Minority women also face a greater risk of dying from infectious diseases or homicide than white women, and a lower risk of dying of cancer, heart disease, or suicide.[21]

These cause-of-death differentials affect the life expectancy of all groups. However, official life expectancy estimates are published only for the black and white populations. In 1989, the average life expectancy at birth was 76.0 years for whites (including Hispanics) and 69.2 years for blacks. While life expectancy increased every year during the 1980s for whites, it began to drop for African Americans after 1984, led primarily by a decline for black men. The difference between black and white life expectancy grew from 5.6 years in 1984 to 6.8 years in 1989.[22] This widening gap is a worrisome trend, especially because it reflects larger increases in homicide and AIDS deaths among young African-American adults.

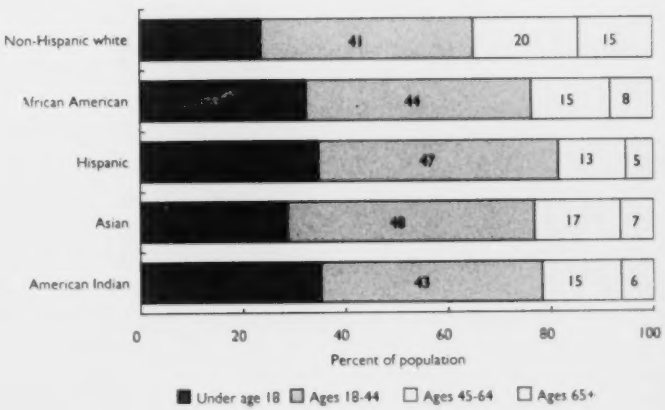
Sex Ratio and Age Structure

The varied rates and patterns of immigration, fertility, and mortality among America's racial and ethnic minorities have shaped their age and sex profiles in distinctive ways. The ratio of men to women among Hispanics is unusually high, for example, reflecting an immigration stream dominated by men whose economic circumstances cause them to leave their families behind. In contrast, African Americans have a slightly lower ratio of men to women, most noticeably among young adults, which is thought to reflect both the undercounting of African-American men in large cities and the relatively high mortality among young black men.

The difference in the age structure of the nation's racial and ethnic minorities is also striking: The age profile for each minority population is younger than that of the non-Hispanic white population. This difference is one reason for the increasing share of minorities in our population as forecast by the Census Bureau. Younger

Figure 3

U.S. Racial and Ethnic Groups by Age, 1992



Source: Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports* P-25, no. 1092 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1992), table 2.

populations have proportionately more women of childbearing age than do older populations. Consequently, they are likely to have more births relative to the white population and to increase at a faster rate. Even if the United States accepted no more immigrants before the middle of the next century, the higher fertility rates among minorities, combined with their younger age structure, would still increase the share of the minority population from 25 percent in 1990 to 38 percent by 2050.[23]

The large numbers of immigrants among the Asian and Hispanic populations yield a younger age profile because young, working-age people are traditionally the most willing to face the risks of moving to a new country. The minority population is also kept young by higher birth rates and—to a lesser extent—by lower life expectancy. Currently, about one-third of U.S. minorities are under age 18, compared with one-fourth of non-Hispanic whites. In 1992, about 7 percent of minorities were age 65 and older, compared with 15 percent of non-Hispanic whites (see Figure 3, page 17). These patterns will change as minorities grow in number and the nation ages.

Perhaps most important for the immediate future is that minorities account for an increasing share of the nation's children. This increase not only affects the racial and ethnic composition of the current school-age population, but also represents the pipeline for the future work force and eventually for our older citizens. In 1992, minorities accounted for 32 percent of all children under age 18; by 2035, over half (51 percent) of all children under age 18 will be either Asian, Hispanic, African American, or American Indian. Given the large proportion of minority children who currently live in poverty or come from disadvantaged homes, policymakers will need to pay greater attention to the needs of America's minority children to ensure the nation a trained and competitive work force in the years ahead.

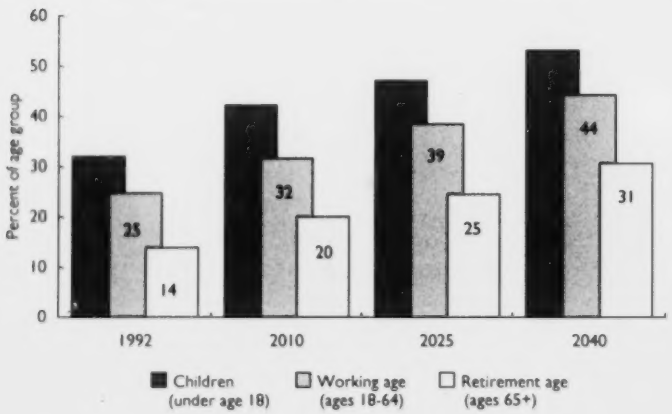
Like the school-age population, the working-age population will also become increasingly diverse (see Figure 4). About one-quarter of today's working-age population (ages 18 to 64) is from a minority group; by 2040, this share will rise to 44 percent.

For now, the working-age minority population tends to be concentrated in the younger half of this age category. While the number of non-Hispanic whites in the younger working ages (18 to 44) is about twice the number in the older age group (45 to 64), the ratio of younger to older working-age adults is about three to one in the U.S. minority population.

The older working ages are the time when most adults move into their prime earning years, and some reach the top ranks of management. In part because of the disparity in the age structure between minorities and non-Hispanic whites, a largely white managerial work force is managing an increasingly multiracial and multicultural group of workers. Many business leaders are recognizing the need for diversity training within their corporations, and minority advocates are keeping a watchful eye on signs of a "glass ceiling" that may exclude minorities from rising to the upper ranks of management.

To date, older Americans are the age group least affected by the nation's growing racial and ethnic diversity. But as Figure 4 shows, the older population will also become more diverse as more

Figure 4
Minority Share of Selected Age Groups, 1992 to 2040



Source: Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports* P-25, no. 1092 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1992), table 2.

minorities join the ranks of "senior citizens." Between 1992 and 2010, for example, the number of minority elderly (ages 65 and older) will increase from 4.5 million to 7.9 million—a 76 percent increase, compared with a 15 percent increase among non-Hispanic white elderly. Minority elderly represented 14 percent of the population age 65 and older in 1992, but by 2010 their share will grow to 20 percent, and by 2040, to 31 percent—more than double the current share. Asians and Hispanics will be the fastest growing segments of the older population. As a result of these changes, policies, programs, and even commercial products targeted at today's older population may need to be reassessed to see if they will meet the needs of tomorrow's elderly.

Minority Households

The youthful age structure and higher fertility of minority groups also affect their living arrangements. Minorities are more likely than whites to live in family households with children (see Table 5). While at least two-thirds of minority families included children in 1990, less than half of white families did, reflecting the older age structure of white adults, delayed childbearing, and lower fertility among white couples.

However, the proportion of married-couple versus single-parent families with children varies substantially by race and ethnicity. Asians are most likely to be living in married-couple families with children. In 1990, such families comprised over half of all Asian family households. By comparison, 47 percent of Latino, 41 percent of American-Indian, and 38 percent of white family households consisted of married couples with children. In contrast, single-parent families are most common among African-American households. Fully one-third of African-American families were female-headed families with children in 1990, while 29 percent were married-couple families with children. Female-headed families with children accounted for 21 percent of American-Indian, 17 percent of Hispanic, and 8 percent or less of Asian or white family households.

Table 5

Household and Family Structure by Race and Ethnicity, 1990

	White	African American	Asian	American Indian[1]	Hispanic[2]
Number of households (in 1,000s)	76,880	9,976	2,014	591	6,002
Family households (percent)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Nonfamily households (percent)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Nonfamily households consisting of people living alone (percent)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
	Percent distribution of family households				
With children, total	48	66	63	68	69
Married couple	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Male head	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Female head	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Without children, total	52	34	37	32	31
Married couple	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Male head	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Female head	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

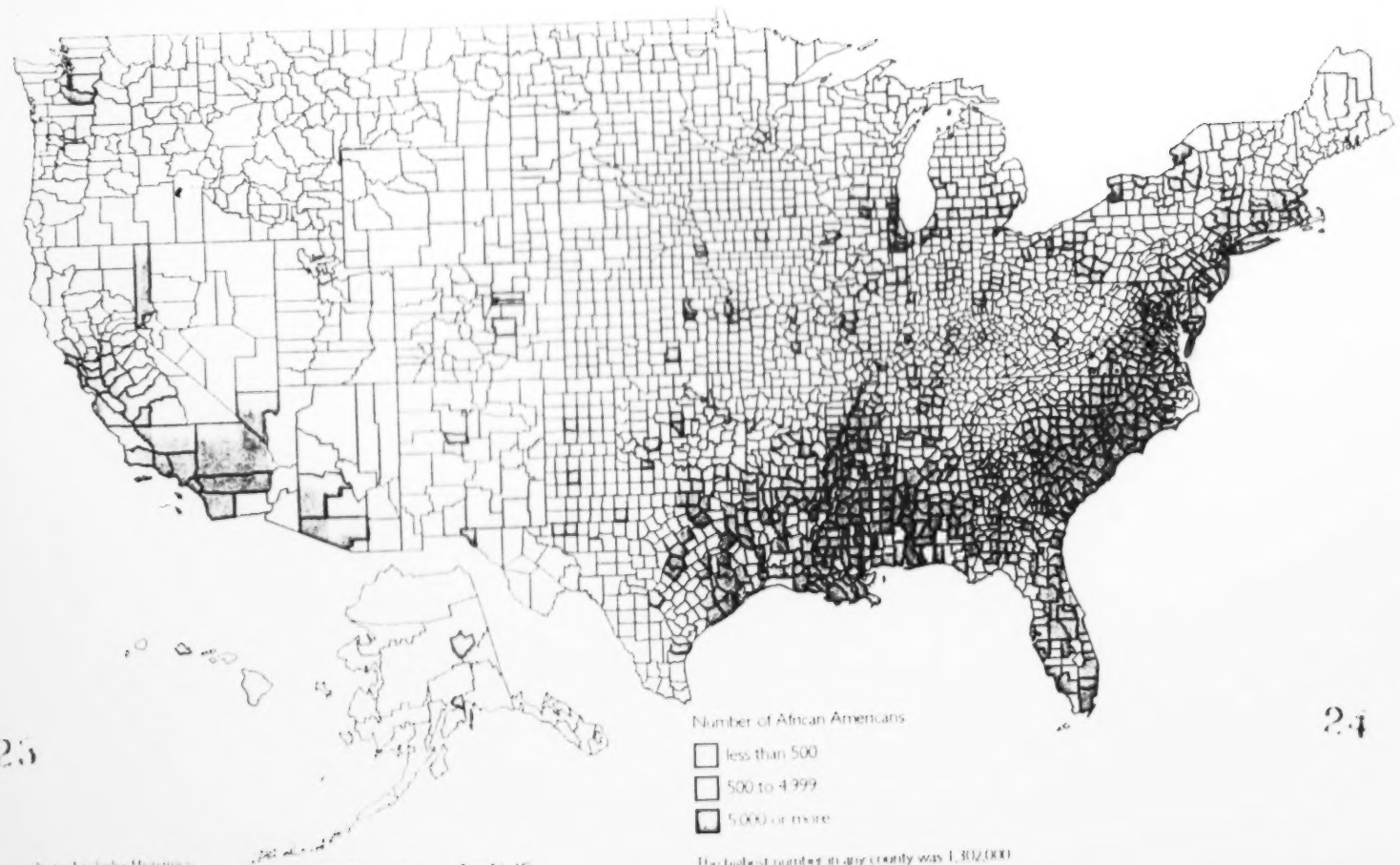
[1] Includes Pacific Islanders.
[2] Includes Eskimos and Aleuts.
[3] Hispanics may be of any race.
Note: Percentages may not add to totals because of rounding.
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census Summary Tape File 1C.

In addition to demographic trends, cultural traditions and economic differences help determine the living arrangements of individuals. At the time of the 1990 Census, 20 to 30 percent of racial and ethnic minorities were not living in a family household. The vast majority of those nonfamily households (ranging from 72 percent for Asians to 85 percent for African Americans) consisted of individuals living alone.

The age structure of a population contributes to the incidence of single-person households because elderly people, particularly widows, often live alone. The propensity to live alone was highest among blacks and whites and lowest among Asians and Hispanics. This difference may reflect different cultural norms as well. Many researchers have noted the tendency for Asian households to include extended family units; others have noted the greater tendency of young Hispanics, especially women, to live with their parents until marriage.[21] These living patterns may be even more pronounced among recent immigrants, who may be less able to afford a home of their own even if they prefer it.

Figure 5

African-American Population of U.S. Counties, 1990


Number of African Americans
less than 500
500 to 4,999
5,000 or more
The highest number in any county was 1,302,000
Source: Prepared by Decision Demographics from 1990 Census Summary Tape File 1C

Where Minorities Live

Although minorities are found in every U.S. region, state, and metropolitan area, they are dispersed unevenly around the country. There are large concentrations in some places, while there are relatively few minority Americans in vastly more places. Over half of America's minority population lives in just five states: California, Texas, New York, Florida, or Illinois; 20 percent live in California alone.

African Americans

The regional location of different minority groups is linked to historical circumstances and migration streams. Although African Americans may be the most widely dispersed minority group, they are still highly concentrated in southern states (see Figure 5). As late as 1910, 89 percent of all blacks resided in the South, a legacy of the pre-Civil War plantation economy.[2] Blacks started to move to the industrial cities of the North when the cheap labor supplied by European immigrants was cut off during World War I. Following World War II, blacks began to migrate to a few large cities in the West, California in particular. Drawn by California's strong economy and a relatively more benign climate of race relations, African Americans in California have generally fared well relative to blacks in other parts of the country.[3] And, 1990 Census data confirm that western cities have lower levels of residential segregation.[4] However, a majority of blacks (54 percent) still lived in the South in 1992. Another 37 percent of African Americans lived in metropolitan areas of the Northeast and Midwest in 1992, with about 8 percent in the West.

Hispanics

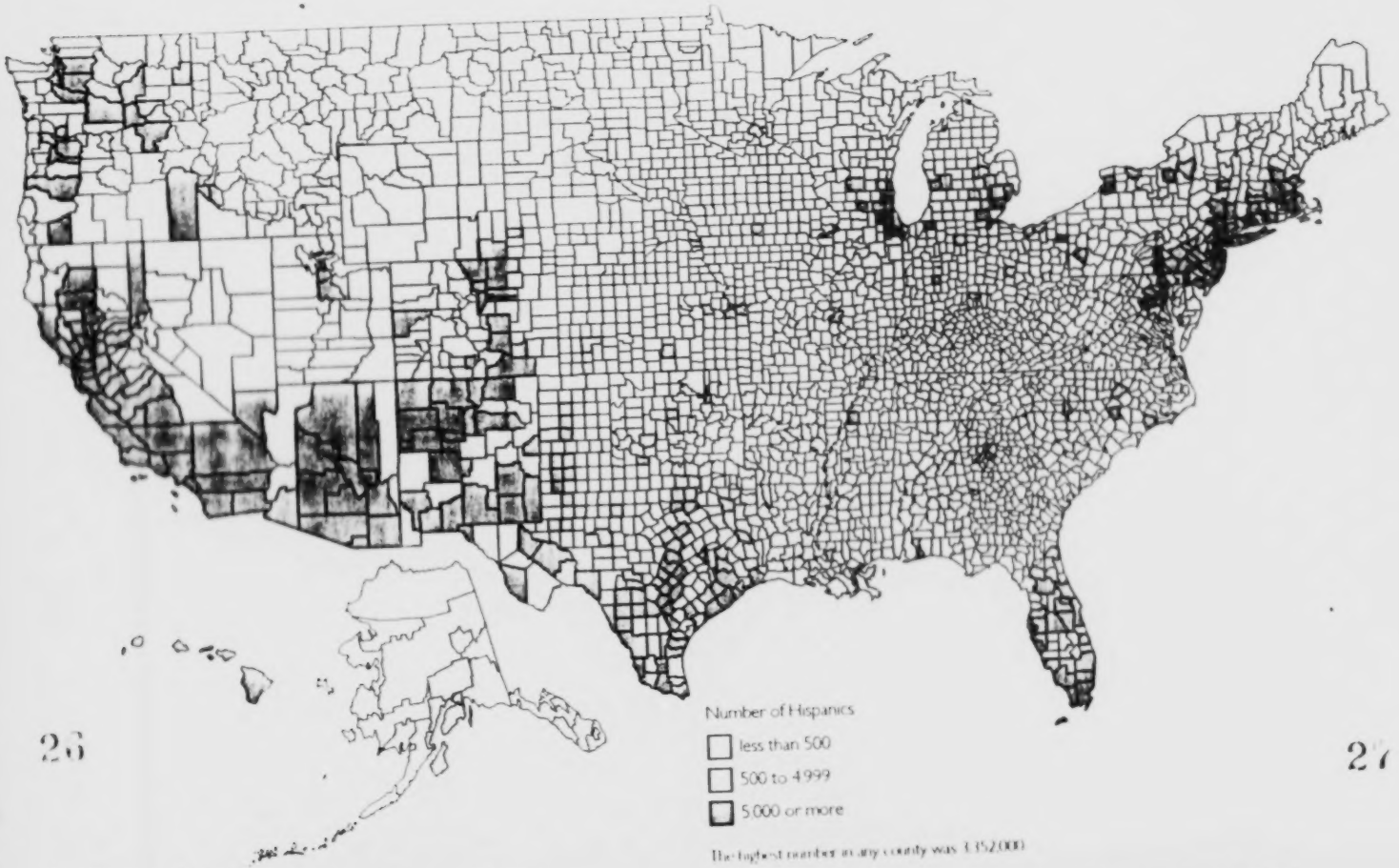
Hispanics are highly concentrated in the Southwest, as shown in Figure 6, page 22. Five southwestern states (California, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado and Texas) were home to 61 percent of U.S. Hispanics in 1990. Over half lived in just two states: California and Texas. While many southwestern Latinos are recent immigrants, others are descendants of the Mexicans and Spanish who settled this territory generations ago, before the area belonged to the United States. More recent immigrants from Mexico and Central America are drawn to this region because of its close proximity to their home countries, employment opportunities, and well-established Latino communities. Outside the Southwest, New York and Florida house the largest concentrations of Latinos. In 1990, almost 10 percent lived in New York and 7 percent lived in Florida.

The geographic concentration of specific Hispanic populations is even more striking. Over four-fifths (83 percent) of Mexican Americans are located in the Southwest (74 percent in Texas and California alone), 68 percent of Puerto Ricans are in the Northeast (primarily New York and New Jersey), and 70 percent of Cubans are in the South, with 65 percent in Florida alone. Geographic concentrations like these make it important to look beyond national averages to better understand Latino Americans.

African Americans began moving from the South to northern industrial cities around the time of World War I.

Figure 6

Hispanic Population of U.S. Counties, 1990



Source: Prepared by Decision Demographics from 1990 Census Summary Tape File 1C

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Asians

Asian and Pacific Islanders are also concentrated in the West (see Figure 7, page 24). Over half (56 percent) lived in that region in 1990. While many are members of recent immigrant groups, others are descendants of workers brought to western states beginning in the mid-1800s to work as laborers on the railroads, or Asians who came in various immigration waves early in the 20th century. Most recent Asian immigrants have entered the United States through either California or New York. Next to California, New York has the highest concentration of Asians, with Hawaii a close third. In 1990, 39 percent of all Asian Americans lived in California, 10 percent lived in New York, and 9 percent lived in Hawaii.

Like Hispanics, different Asian and Pacific Islander groups tend to live in specific states and regions. However, the largest share of nearly every Asian group lives in California. Sixty percent of U.S. Chinese live in California or New York, while about two-thirds of Filipinos and Japanese live in either California or Hawaii. Asian Indian and Korean populations are somewhat less concentrated geographically, although large communities have grown up in a handful of states, including Illinois, New Jersey, and Texas, as well as California and New York. Resettlement schemes in the 1980s for Southeast Asian refugees created pockets of Asians in other states. Nearly one-fifth of the U.S. Hmong population live in Minnesota, for example, and just over one-sixth live in Wisconsin. Over one-tenth of American Vietnamese live in Texas, the largest group of Vietnamese outside California.

American Indians

American Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts are also concentrated in the West. Nearly half (48 percent) lived in that region in 1990 (see Figure 8, page 26). To some extent the present location of American-Indian populations reflects government policies and private practices that caused the systematic elimination of Indians in the eastern part of the U.S. during the 1800s. Many Indians were killed, others were forced to move west. In the 20th century, urban relocation programs further redistributed the American-Indian population.[58]

Oklahoma is home to the largest number of American Indians, a direct result of forced removals from eastern states during the 1800s. In 1990, Oklahoma included 250,000 Indians, followed closely in number by California and Arizona with about 200,000 each. New Mexico, with 130,000 American Indians, is the only other state with a large Indian population. The large Indian population in California resulted in part from relocation programs carried out in the 1950s and 1960s.

About one-third of American Indians live on reservations or other Indian areas, many with extremely small populations. The Navajo Reservation and Trust Lands, which extend from Arizona into New Mexico and Utah, is by far the largest Indian enclave in the country. The 1990 Census enumerated 143,000 Navajos and other Indians in this area—but this is known to be an undercount. An estimated 12 percent of the populations living on reservations may have been missed in the census.[59]

Eskimos and Aleuts are heavily concentrated in Alaska. Over three-fourths of Eskimos (78 percent), and 42 percent of Aleuts live there. Another 9 percent of Eskimos and 26 percent of Aleuts live in Pacific Coast states.

Urban Living

As a group, minorities are more likely than whites to live in cities and metropolitan areas. The 1990 Census showed that 86 percent of minorities lived in metro areas, compared with 73 percent of non-Hispanic whites. Except for American Indians and Alaska Natives, well over half of every minority group resides in metropolitan areas.

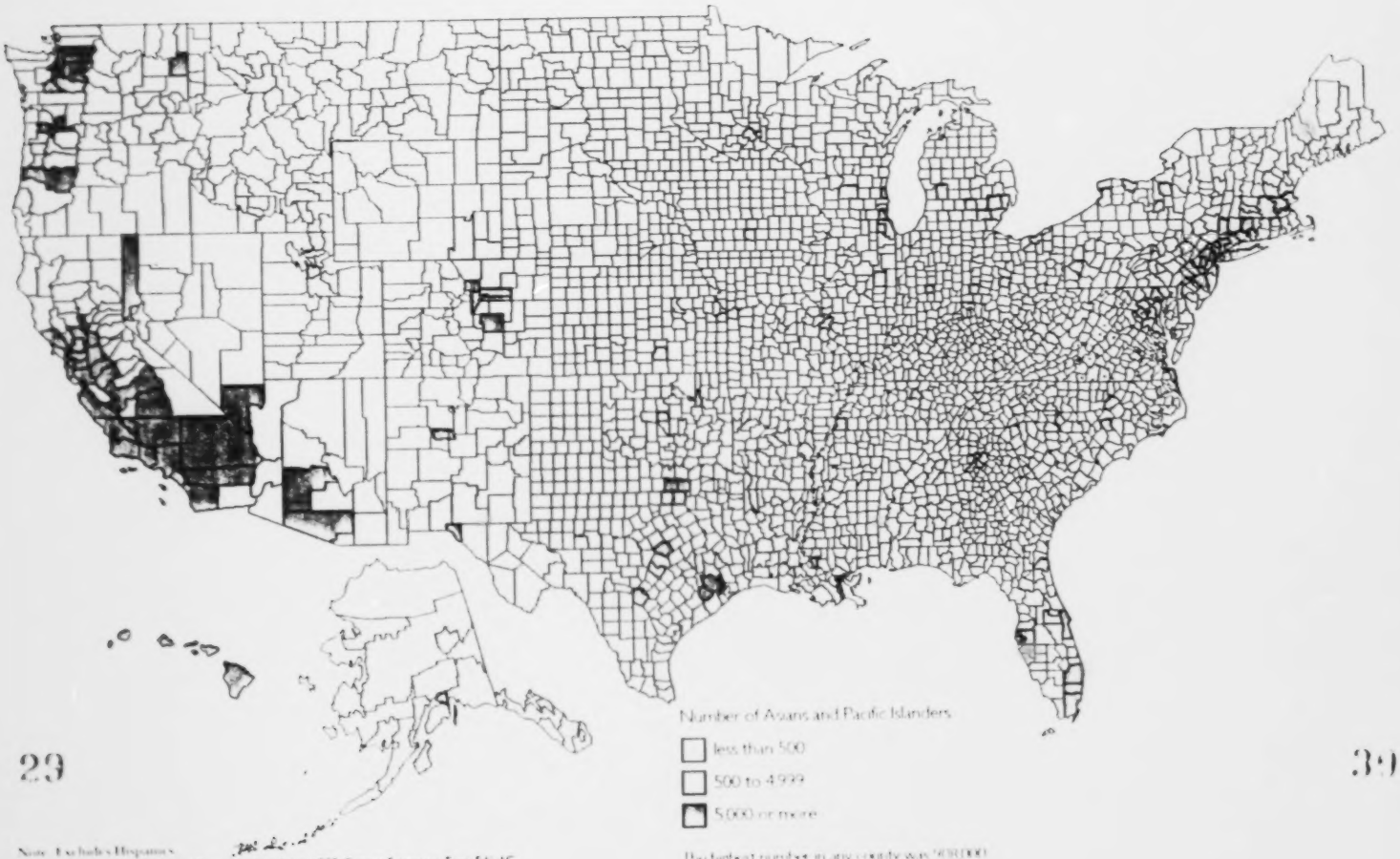
Blacks and American Indians are the only minority groups with any significant rural presence. More than half of all American Indians live in rural areas, many on reservations. About one out of six African Americans resided in rural areas in 1990—primarily in the South.

Minorities now account for more than half the population in many of the nation's largest cities. Of the eight U.S. cities with over a million residents, only

Except for American Indians and Alaska Natives, well over half of every minority group resides in metropolitan areas.

Figure 7

Asian and Pacific Islander Population of U.S. Counties, 1990



Note: Excludes Hispanics.

Source: Prepared by Decision Demographics from 1990 Census Summary Tape File 1C.

The highest number in any county was 630,000.

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two (San Diego and Philadelphia) have populations in which non-Hispanic whites are the majority; and non-Hispanic whites are likely to lose their majority status in these cities within a few years. The combined populations of the four major minority groups made up 41 percent of San Diego's population, and 48 percent of Philadelphia's population in 1990. Among the 20 largest U.S. cities, 9 are a majority non-Hispanic white, 4 are a majority African American, and 1 city has a majority Hispanic population (see Table 6).

The growing minority share of urban populations is reflected in the shifting makeup of local governments, and has contributed directly to a new generation of minority politicians. Many of the nation's minority politicians gained national prominence as mayors of large cities, including two members of President Bill Clinton's cabinet (Henry Cisneros and Frederico Peña).

Within America's metropolitan areas, minorities are heavily, and increasingly, concentrated in central cities. Because non-Hispanic whites have been moving out of the large city centers faster than minorities, minorities are becoming a larger segment of central-city populations. In some metropolitan areas, the influx of recent immigrants is increasing the minority populations in central cities. Between 1980 and 1990, the minority share of central-city populations climbed from 35 to over 40 percent.

The growing minority share of central-city populations is occurring at the same time that inner-city job opportunities are receding, particularly for young people. The restructuring of the American economy has eliminated many traditional entry-level jobs in manufacturing and other industries located in cities. Meanwhile, suburbanization has moved many entry-level service jobs farther from where minorities live.

Table 6

Race and Ethnicity in the 20 Largest U.S. Cities, 1990

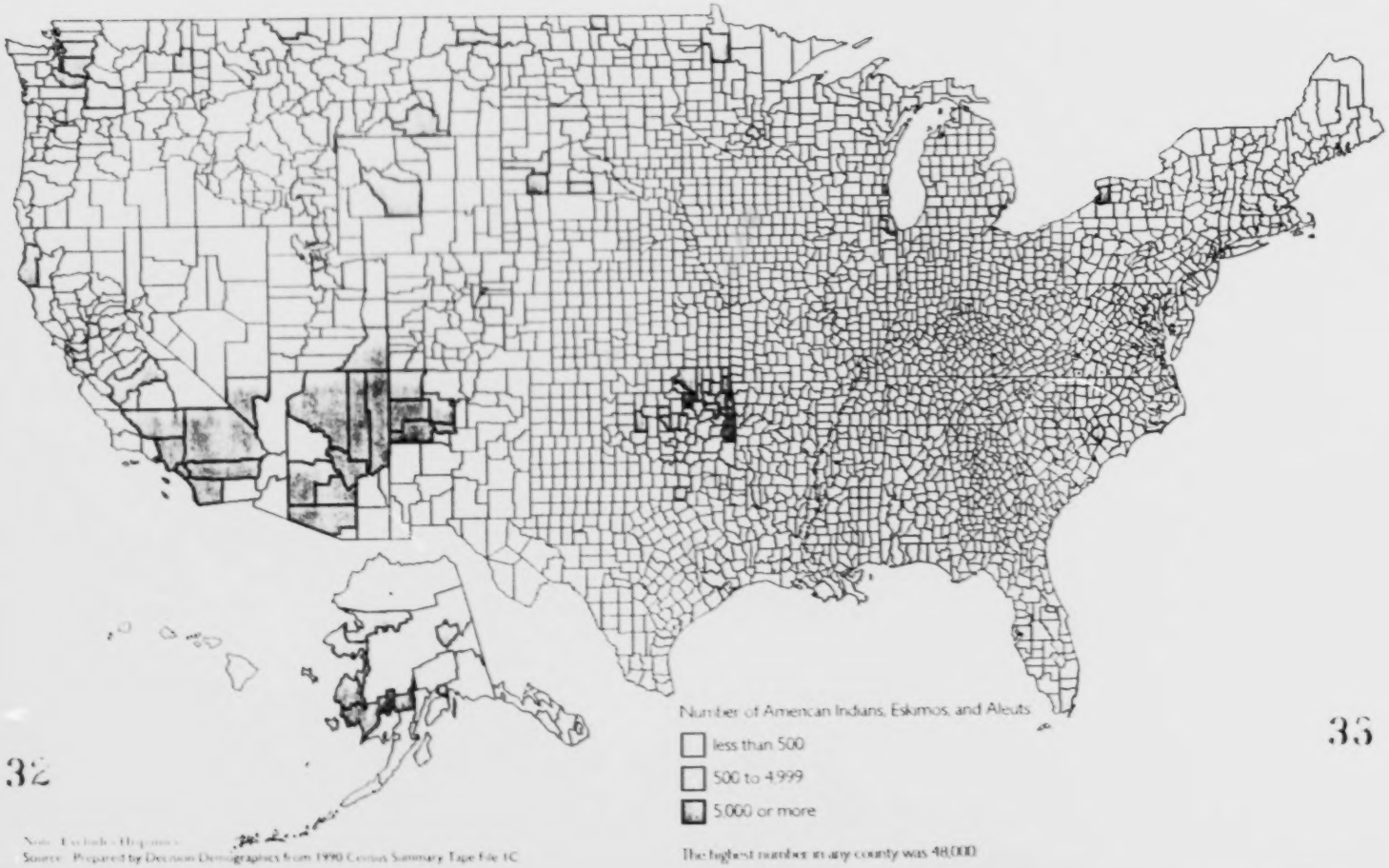
City	State	Population (in 1,000s)	Percent of population: Non-Hispanic White	African American	Asian[1]	American Indian[2]	Hispanic
New York	NY	7,323	43	29	7	[3]	24
Los Angeles	CA	3,485	37	14	9	1	39
Chicago	IL	2,784	39	39	3	[3]	19
Houston	TX	1,631	41	28	4	[3]	27
San Diego	CA	1,111	60	9	9	1	20
Phoenix	AZ	983	71	5	2	2	20
Philadelphia	PA	1,586	40	39	3	[3]	8
San Antonio	TX	936	37	7	2	[3]	53
Dallas	TX	1,007	45	29	3	[3]	22
Detroit	MI	1,028	24	76	1	[3]	3
San Jose	CA	782	45	5	26	1	26
Indianapolis	IN	742	74	23	1	[3]	3
San Francisco	CA	724	47	11	30	1	14
Baltimore	MD	736	39	59	2	[3]	1
Jacksonville	FL	635	68	27	2	[3]	3
Columbus	OH	633	75	22	2	[3]	2
Milwaukee	WI	628	66	30	2	1	5
Memphis	TN	610	47	51	1	[3]	1
Washington	DC	607	30	66	2	[3]	5
Boston	MA	574	60	25	5	[3]	10

[1] Includes Pacific Islanders.
[2] Includes Eskimos and Aleuts.
[3] Less than 0.5 percent.

Source: 1990 Census Summary Tape File 1C

Figure 8

American-Indian, Aleut, and Eskimo Population of U.S. Counties, 1990


Number of American Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts
less than 500
500 to 4,999
5,000 or more
The highest number in any county was 48,000

Source: Prepared by Decision Demographics from 1990 Census Summary Tape File 1C

Furthermore, the entry-level jobs available in central cities tend to pay lower wages than similar jobs in the suburbs. One study found that wages in fast-food chains increased the farther the restaurant was from the city center.[30]

Despite the increasing concentration of minorities in central cities, a growing number have been moving into the suburbs, particularly in large metropolitan areas. Minorities accounted for 18 percent of suburbanites in 1990, up from 13 percent in 1980. The share of all blacks living in the suburbs rose from 27 percent in 1980 to 32 percent in 1990. The percentage of Hispanics living in suburbs rose from 40 to 43 percent over the decade, while among Asians it grew from 48 to 51 percent.[31] Just over one-fourth of American Indians lived in suburban areas in 1990.[32]

In most metropolitan areas, the minority share of suburban populations increased during the 1980s. Suburbanization of minorities has been most pronounced in western cities—where 51 percent of minorities and 62 percent of non-Hispanic whites lived in suburban areas in 1990. The trend is least pronounced in the North, where 27 percent of minorities lived in suburbs, compared with 70 percent of non-Hispanic whites.

Since this movement coincides with increasing incomes for many minority families, suburbs with large minority populations are now identified on the maps that businesses use for locating affluent consumers. Starting in the late 1980s, for example, the shopping center industry began to build new centers in areas with large minority populations and to select retailers and merchandise that reflected the preferences of specific minority groups.[33]

Central Cities and Segregation

Some analysts are concerned that only the more affluent minorities are moving to the suburbs, creating a greater concentration of poor, disadvantaged racial and ethnic minorities in cities.[34] The continued concentration of minorities in central cities is related to several factors. First, cities are the port of entry for Asian, Hispanic, and other minority immigrants. Second, large industrial cities—where segregated neighborhoods were the rule—absorbed most of the millions of southern blacks who moved north after 1910. Third, discriminatory real estate practices and *de facto* segregation restrained the movement of minorities to the suburbs at the same time that non-Hispanic whites were moving out of central cities. Fourth, since minorities are disproportionately poor, many cannot afford to move to more expensive suburbs. In 1987, for example, minorities comprised 49 percent of residents of public or subsidized housing. About one in ten white renters lived in public or subsidized housing in 1987, compared with 29 percent of black, 27 percent of American-Indian, 16 percent of Latino, and 12 percent of Asian renters.[35]

Similar factors have perpetuated the residential segregation of minority groups within cities. A recent study of 1990 Census data by demographers Roderick Harrison and Daniel Weinberg examined residential segregation for all major minority groups in all U.S. metro areas. They concluded that "blacks suffer the most segregation. American Indians, Eskimos, or Aleuts have roughly the same level of segregation as Asians or Pacific Islanders, but both have lower levels than Hispanics." They also found little change in these levels since 1980.[36] In another study, conducted in the New York metropolitan area, demographers Richard Alba and John Logan found that after adjusting for differences in family size and educational attainment, Asian Americans were fully integrated in the suburbs, Hispanics were somewhat integrated, and blacks were largely segregated.[37] Of course, outside metropolitan areas, many American Indians are highly segregated by virtue of living on reservations or other Indian areas.

Residential segregation patterns differ across the country. In general, the most segregated cities for blacks are the old industrial cities in the Northeast and Midwest. Except for Chicago, the most segregated cities for Hispanics are all in the Northeast. For Asian Americans, cities in California tend to be the most segregated, and for American

"[B]lacks suffer the most segregation. American Indians, Eskimos, or Aleuts have roughly the same level of segregation as Asians or Pacific Islanders, but both have lower levels than Hispanics."

Indians, the most segregated cities are in the West and Midwest.[38]

Residential segregation is accounted for by racial discrimination, both past and present, as well as by personal preference. One recent study of Los Angeles residents, for example, found that most minorities prefer to live in areas where their ethnic or racial group comprises at least 40 percent of the population.[39] While public policies have sought to end involuntary segregation, reflecting the general consensus that discrimination in housing harms society, "there is no similar consensus on whether residential segregation is inherently problematic if and when it might instead reflect the reasonably free and unconstrained decisions and choices of people—especially of minorities—to reside among people of similar heritage and culture."[40] Such communities can offer crucial support to their residents, as have ethnic Italian, Polish, or Greek neighborhoods in some cities.

During the 1980s, college graduates were virtually the only group whose income increased, after adjusting for inflation.

Racial differences in perceptions of what constitutes an integrated neighborhood may also help sustain residential segregation. In a recent study, for example, blacks in several large cities expressed a preference for neighborhoods that were equally divided among blacks and whites. Most whites preferred to live in an "integrated" neighborhood in which 80 percent of the residents were white and only 20 percent black.[41]

Discriminatory housing practices and the decision to live near others of the same racial or ethnic group both determine residential patterns, as do income or other economic factors. While the relative role of each of these factors may be difficult to ascertain, the location of a persons' residence remains important. Where people live often signifies their socioeconomic status, and can affect their chances of employment or determine their ability to borrow money. Neighborhoods differ in the caliber of schools and services, and the likelihood of being affected by crime.

Residential segregation is one of the fundamental features that distinguishes minorities from the majority society. While it may serve as a source of strength, by virtue of the support a cohesive community can provide, it can also hinder advancement. Using the conventional measures of success, minorities are unlikely to advance in U.S. society unless they interact with the majority society outside ethnic communities.

Educational Achievement

For most Americans, education is the key to a good job and promising future. Enhancing the education levels of minorities is considered crucial for socioeconomic advancement. In addition, upgrading the skills and education of minorities is crucial if the United States is to compete in the global economy of the 21st century.

While educational attainment has increased for all racial and ethnic groups in the United States, a smaller percentage of minority students than non-Hispanic whites graduate from high school, on average. This is an increasingly serious problem because the nation's economic restructuring portends bleak job prospects for high school dropouts.[42] Smaller percentages of minorities than whites get the college or postgraduate degrees that provide access to jobs with the highest pay and greatest potential for advancement. During the 1980s, college graduates were virtually the only group whose income increased, after adjusting for inflation.[43]

The parents of today's minority youths often had less formal education than their white counterparts. Because parents' educational level is often linked to a student's academic performance,[44] minority students may start school at a disadvantage. Nevertheless, educational attainment increased for all the minority groups—as it did among non-Hispanic whites—over the past decade. The percentages graduating from high school and attending four or more years of college improved most for African Americans and American Indians. As a result, educational disparities *within* minority groups have grown, contributing to increased economic polarization.

Among young adults, Hispanics have the lowest educational attainment, while

non-Hispanic whites and Asians have the highest (see Figure 9). Sixty percent of Latinos ages 25 to 44 had graduated from high school in 1992, compared with about 90 percent of Asians and non-Hispanic whites.

The generally lower attainment levels of Hispanics are only partially explained by the large numbers of Hispanic immigrants who completed little formal education in their home country. In 1980, 40 percent of foreign-born Hispanics were high school graduates. Only slightly more, 53 percent, of American-born Hispanic adults were high school graduates in that year.[45] Many Hispanic students come from homes in which little English is spoken; and limited English language proficiency has also been blamed for holding back Hispanics.

Hispanics are also less likely than other minority groups to attend or graduate from college. One-fourth of young Hispanic adults had attended college in 1992, compared with over one-half of non-Hispanic whites and two-thirds of Asians.

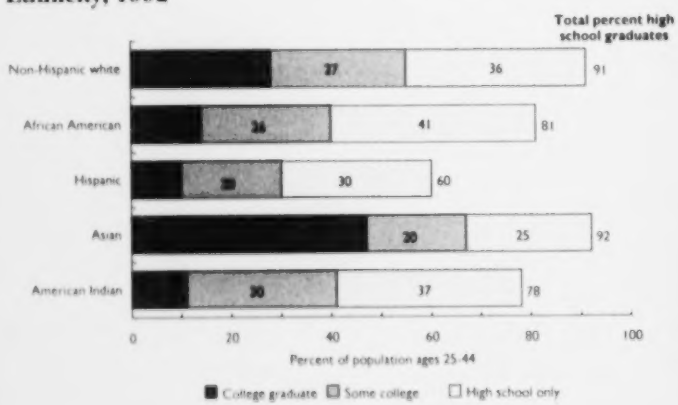
Next to Hispanics, American Indians are least likely to graduate from high school or college. Some American-Indian students also have limited English proficiency,[46] and that language barrier, along with uneven access to good schools, may explain some of the lower educational attainment of Indians. Until recent decades, many reservation Indians attended boarding schools that stressed cultural assimilation rather than academic achievement. Native languages and religious practices were forbidden, encouraging many children to avoid attending school altogether. In 1980, just over half (56 percent) of American Indians over age 24 had completed 12 or more years of school.[47] By 1990, about two-thirds of American Indians over age 24 were high school graduates, according to the census; and more than three-fourths of the younger adults (ages 25 to 44) had graduated from high school by 1992, according to survey data. Just over 40 percent of young American-Indian adults had attended or graduated from college in 1992.

The lower educational attainment among African Americans is a vestige of past discrimination that denied educational opportunities to large numbers of blacks, especially in the rural South. In 1970, only about one-third of African-American adults had graduated from high school.[48] Among younger blacks who grew up after the major civil rights advances, the share graduating from high school was 81 percent in 1992, approaching the percentage for whites and Asians.[49] However, young non-Hispanic whites are still twice as likely, and Asians three times as likely as young African Americans to complete four or more years of college.

About 90 percent of both Asians and non-Hispanic whites graduate from high school, but Asians are more likely than whites to complete four or more years of college. Among the high school graduating class of 1980, for example, 45 percent of Asian-American students had enrolled in a four-year college by the following fall, compared with 32 percent of non-Hispanic whites, 28 percent of blacks, 17 percent of Hispanics, and 15 percent of American Indians.[50] The educational success of Asians and Pacific Islanders may be best exemplified by the share who continue beyond a four-year college degree. Almost one out of seven (14 percent) Asians and Pacific Islanders age 25 or

Figure 9

Educational Attainment of Young Adults by Race and Ethnicity, 1992



Source: Author's analysis of the March 1992 Current Population Survey

Table 7

Labor Force Participation by Educational Attainment and Race and Ethnicity, 1992

	Percent in the labor force[1]					
	Non-Hispanic					
	White	African American	Asian[2]	American Indian[3]	Hispanic	Total
Total	**66**	**62**	**64**	**60**	**66**	**65**
Less than high school	37	34	35	36	51	39
High school graduate only	67	72	65	67	67	68
Some college	73	75	64	75	78	73
College graduate	82	84	80	84	84	82

[1] Percent of population age 16 and over who are in the labor force. The labor force includes persons who were working the week preceeding the survey and persons not employed who are actively seeking employment.
[2] Includes Pacific Islanders.
[3] Includes Eskimos and Aleuts.

Source: Author's analysis of the March 1992 Current Population Survey.

older have a graduate or professional degree—almost twice the percentage for whites (8 percent) and three to four times the rates for other minorities.[51]

The high educational attainment of Asians is partly explained by the recent immigration streams from Pacific Rim countries. Many of today's Asian adults came to the United States specifically to attend universities. Others came already holding college degrees.

The evolution of the economy suggests that proficiency in mathematics and science will be increasingly important in obtaining well-paying jobs. Minority children differ considerably in this specific aspect of education. Among public school eighth-graders, 44 percent of Asian children were enrolled in algebra or advanced mathematics in 1988, compared with 31 percent of whites, 25 percent of blacks, 18 percent of Hispanics, and 14 percent of American Indians.[52] In contrast, 15 percent of American-Indian eighth-graders were enrolled in remedial mathematics, as were 11 percent of Hispanics, 10 percent of blacks, 7 percent of Asians, and 6 percent of whites. These differences persisted even for students with similar socioeconomic characteristics, giving rise to charges that many minorities are channeled into less advanced classes, limiting their options for further study.[53]

The World of Work

Despite the education gap between many minority and white Americans, overall increases in educational attainment have improved minorities' occupational status and income. However, minorities who do achieve higher educational levels and enter higher status jobs still encounter barriers to advancement. And they do not reap the same financial rewards from education as do their white counterparts.[54] Aside from questions of fairness, the growing size of the minority population makes the full participation of all racial and ethnic groups in the labor force increasingly important for the United States. The share of minorities in the civilian labor force grew from 18 percent in 1980 to 22 percent in 1990. By 2005, minorities could account for 28 percent of the U.S. labor force.[55]

In general, minorities are just as likely as whites to be in the labor force. Between 60 and 66 percent of working-age adults in the major racial and ethnic groups were in the labor force in 1992. And, as educational attainment increases, so does the likelihood of working. At least 80 percent of college-educated Americans from all groups were in the labor force in 1992 (see Table 7). In contrast, less than 40 percent of non-Hispanic minorities without a high school diploma were in the labor force. The relatively high percentage of less-educated Latinos who were working may reflect the greater availability of low-skilled jobs in areas with concentrations of Hispanic immigrants, as well as a smaller percentage of young adults in college. At the same time, limited job opportunities in rural areas may depress the work force rates among American Indians and African Americans.

Economic restructuring during the 1980s also eliminated many jobs in the large industrial cities of the Northeast and Midwest which have large African-American populations. Sociologist William Julius Wilson, among others, posits that the loss of well-paying manufacturing jobs in large northern cities has been especially problematic for African-American men.[56] At the same

time, while this restructuring reduced opportunities for less-educated men, it increased job choices for women at all educational levels. During the 1980s, women's wages rose relative to men's wages, considerably narrowing the disparity between the two.[37]

In general, men are more likely to be working than women. In 1992, labor force participation rates for males ranged from a low of 68 percent for blacks to a high of 80 percent for Hispanics, with non-Hispanic whites at 75 percent. The range of participation rates among females is much narrower, running from 52 percent for American Indians to 58 percent for non-Hispanic white women. The difference between male and female participation rates is smallest among African Americans—reflecting the relatively low rates for black men as well as the traditionally high percentage of black women in the labor force.

Among African Americans, the divergent labor force and earnings trends for men and women may have made marriage less attractive financially for some black women. Some analysts think the smaller gap in labor force participation rates and earnings of African-American men and women contributed to the high rate of female-headed families.[38]

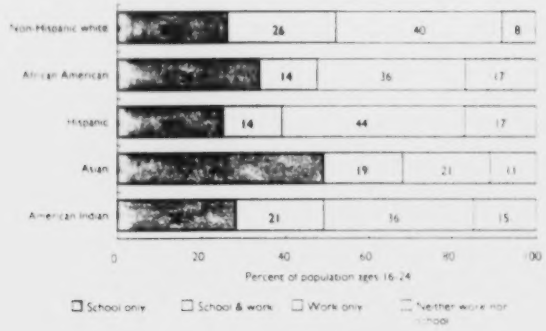
Box 4

Activities of Young Adults

As young people prepare to leave high school and begin their adult life, they are confronted with many choices. The major activities of people in their late teens and early twenties provide clues regarding their future.

Two of the major activities of young adults are school and work. According to survey data, nearly half (49 percent) of Asian Americans ages 16 to 24 were in school full time in 1991, well above the percentage in any other group, including non-Hispanic whites. The worrisome segment in each group are the young adults who are neither working nor in school. While these youths may be engaged in some other activity—they may be home caring for children, for example—they may not be developing the skills or experience needed to achieve economic self-sufficiency. In 1991, about one-sixth of young blacks and Hispanics were neither working nor studying in school, compared with fewer than an eighth of Asian Americans and a tenth of non-Hispanic whites.

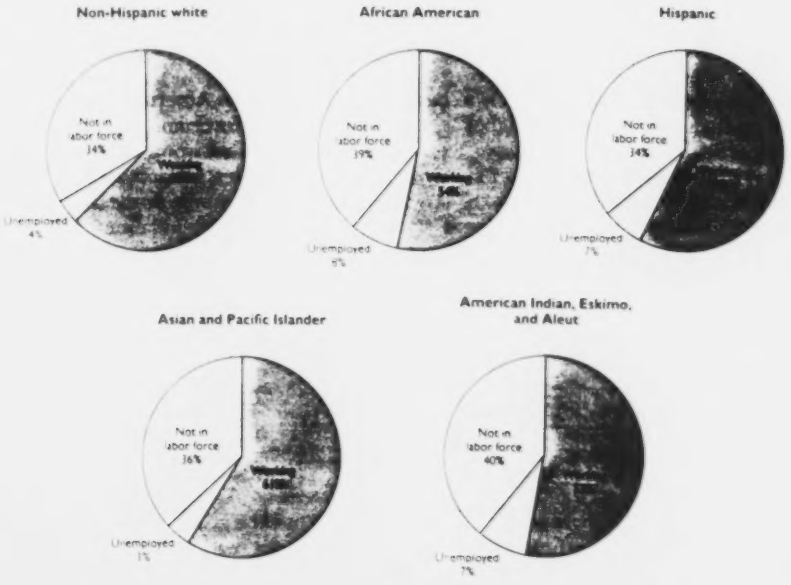
Major Activities of Young Minorities, 1991



Source: Author's analysis of March 1991 Current Population Survey.

Figure 10

Labor Force Status for U.S. Racial and Ethnic Groups, 1992



Note: The labor force includes individuals age 16 and over who were working in the week preceding the survey plus those who were actively seeking a job (the unemployed).

Source: Author's analysis of the March 1992 Current Population Survey.

The nation's policymakers are turning their attention to changes in the transition of young people from school to work within the current economic climate. This school-to-work transition has become increasingly problematic, especially for minorities.[29] Although more minority youth are graduating from high school than ever before, young minorities are finding it more difficult to gain a foothold in the work world. African-American youths have had more trouble entering the work force than Hispanics, although blacks are more likely than Hispanics to have finished high school. During the 1980s, roughly 30 percent of both white and Latino men had obtained a full-time job by age 20, compared with less than 20 percent of black men. A similar pattern prevailed for women, although these race and ethnic differences vanished for women with equivalent ability scores and family backgrounds.[30]

Many people in the labor force do not currently hold a job, but are "actively seeking employment." These are the individuals who comprise the official unemployment statistics. Except for Asians, minorities of both sexes are more likely than whites to be unemployed (see Figure 10). African-American and American-Indian men were nearly three times as likely as white men (including Hispanics) to be unemployed in 1990. Hispanic men were twice as likely as whites to be unemployed. The pattern is similar among women.

Unemployment statistics do not capture the number of discouraged workers—people who have given up hope of finding a job. Neither do they reflect the number of underemployed individuals—people who are working part-time, or in jobs for which they are overqualified. Both discouraged and underemployed workers are overrepresented among minorities.[31]

Occupation

Among employed Americans, non-Hispanic whites and Asians are more likely to hold white-collar jobs, ranging from managerial and professional to clerical (see Table 8). Furthermore, whites and Asians are more likely than Hispanics, African Americans, or American Indians to work in the more prestigious managerial and professional white-collar occupations rather than less prestigious white-collar jobs such as typists or sales clerks.

Non-Hispanic whites and Asians are less likely than Hispanics, African Americans, or American Indians to work in lower-paying semi-skilled jobs, or as service workers. And, while the share of U.S. workers in farming, fishing, or forestry is quite small, it is highest among Hispanics—because of the large number of Hispanic migrant farmworkers—and among American Indians—because of the large numbers living in rural areas.

While minorities are clustered in the lower-status occupations, and many continue to face discrimination in hiring and promotions, the occupational status of minorities has been improving. The percentage of blacks in managerial and professional occupations increased from 14 percent in 1980 to 17 percent in 1990. The percentage in managerial/professional jobs rose slightly over the period for Hispanics (from 12 to 13 percent) and American Indians (from 16 to 17 percent). Soon-to-be-released census data are likely to show even greater change in the occupational status of American-born Hispanics over the decade.

As doors open for some minorities, they often reveal closed doors farther along the career path. With more minorities entering higher-status jobs, the "glass ceiling" that separates minorities from executive suites and board rooms will undoubtedly be an important issue during the 1990s.

Income, Wealth, and Business Ownership

Asians earn higher incomes than either whites or other minorities, to some extent reflecting their higher educational attainment and higher-status jobs. At nearly $37,000 per year, the median household income of Asians was 17 percent higher than that of whites ($31,400) in 1989, while the incomes of all other minority groups were significantly lower. The median household income was lowest among blacks and American Indians, about $20,000 per year, while Hispanics' median household income was just over $24,000 (see Figure 11, page 34).

Except for American Indians, all racial and ethnic groups experienced an increase in real median household income during the 1980s. Asians enjoyed a nearly 8 percent increase in real household income during the 1980s. This is remarkable considering that a high percentage of Asian Americans are immigrants—traditionally a low-income group. But the high education levels and financial resources of many Asian immigrants probably

Table 8

Occupational Distribution by Race and Ethnicity, 1990

	Percent of employed persons				
		Non-Hispanic			
Occupation	White	African American	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian[1]	Hispanic
White Collar					
Managerial and professional[2]	28	17	30	17	13
Technical and administrative[3]	32	29	33	26	26
Blue Collar					
Skilled labor[4]	11	8	8	14	13
Semi-skilled and unskilled labor[5]	14	22	12	20	24
Services[6]	12	23	15	19	19
Farming, fishing, and forestry	2	2	1	4	5
Total (in 1,000s)	95,798	12,524	3,459	777	9,832

Note: Excludes anyone who has not worked since 1985.

[1] Includes Eskimos and Aleuts.

[2] Includes managers, administrators, professionals, and teachers.

[3] Includes technicians and related support staff, administrative and clerical support and sales.

[4] Includes precision production, craft, and repair workers.

[5] Includes machine operators, assemblers, inspectors, transportation workers, handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers.

[6] Private household workers, protective service, and other service workers.

Source: Author's analysis of 1990 Census Equal Employment Opportunity tape.

Figure 11

Median Household Income by Race and Ethnicity, 1979 and 1989

Note: 1979 income expressed in 1989 dollars
Source: 1980 and 1990 Censuses of Population and Housing

counterbalanced the disadvantages associated with being recent arrivals.

The income gap between whites and Hispanics and blacks changed little, while the income advantage of whites over Native Americans widened. The deteriorating level of real household income among American Indians may be linked to the fact that a majority of Indians live in rural areas, and many rural economies suffered during the 1980s.[62] Furthermore, Indians tend to live in some of the poorest rural areas in the country.

The reasons for the income disparities between whites and minorities and among minority groups are complex and not easily measured. However, three factors that are clearly relevant and can be quantified are education, region of residence, and family structure.

Education

The generally lower educational attainment of minorities does not completely explain the gaps in income. Whites have higher incomes than minorities with the same education, even Asians. And although blacks have higher educational levels than Hispanics, Hispanic income is well above that of blacks. Asians have higher earnings than other minorities with the same education, but they must complete more education than whites to earn comparable salaries.

In short, the financial rewards for education are lower for minorities than for whites, and they are not consistent across minority groups. The economic benefit for each additional year a non-Hispanic white student stays in school is nearly 50 percent higher than for a black student, and over two times higher than for a Hispanic student.

On average, non-Hispanic whites earn an additional $3,000 for each year of education completed.[63] For Asians the figure is $2,300, while it is $2,500 for Indians, $1,900 for blacks, and only $1,200 for Hispanics. Undoubtedly, part of this gap arises from racial discrimination in hiring and promotions; another portion may reflect differences in the quality of education attained.

Residential location

Some of the income differences among groups may be explained by the higher average incomes in cities or geographic regions where minorities are concentrated. Most Asians live in large cities of the West or Northeast where salaries and living costs are high. In New York, Dallas, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C., for example, median income for whites including Hispanics was above that of Asians in 1989. In Los Angeles-Long Beach and Chicago—two cities where the white population contains a large number of Hispanics—Asian and white incomes are the same. If income data were available for non-Hispanic whites in these cities, it is likely that their median income would be above that of Asians. On the other hand, a large share of blacks live in the rural South and a large share of Indians live on rural reservations—areas with lower incomes and living costs.

Family type

Blacks, Hispanics, and Indians are more likely than whites or Asians to live in single-parent families with children. This could contribute to their lower median incomes because single-parent

families have lower incomes than married-couple families, in part because there are fewer potential workers in the household. In 1991, the median family income for all married-couple families was $41,000 per year, more than twice that of female-headed families ($17,000).[54] However, even among married couples, median income is lower among minorities. The median for black married couples is 81 percent that of non-Hispanic whites, and the median for Hispanic couples is 65 percent that of non-Hispanic whites.

Income Diversity

While income rose moderately for most minority groups during the 1980s, a growing segment within each group entered upper middle-class, even affluent, income levels. The number of minority households with inflation-adjusted incomes of $50,000 or more grew from 1.7 million in 1979 to 3.1 million in 1989. Part of this increase resulted from the rapid growth of minority populations over the decade, but it also reflects significant income growth within minority groups.

The share of households with annual incomes of $50,000 or more expanded most for Asians during the 1980s, rising from 27 to 35 percent. In contrast, the share of whites receiving $50,000 or more grew from 22 to 26 percent during the same period. A much smaller percentage (16 percent) of Hispanics were in the upper income category in 1989, but this was still an improvement over 1979. Only about 13 percent of Native Americans and African Americans were in the $50,000 or greater category in 1989. This represented a significant gain for blacks, while the percentage of American Indians in the $50,000 or more category rose only 1 percentage point over the decade.

Household income reflects the number of earners in a household as well as the income of each earner. There is some evidence that an increase in the number of two-earner African-American households rather than a rise in personal earnings is primarily responsible for the growing affluence among blacks.[55] African-American households tend to have fewer workers compared with other racial and ethnic groups, however. In 1992, 46 percent of white households (including white Hispanic households) had two or more workers, compared with 36 percent of black households and 49 percent of Hispanic households.[56] In 1990, 18 percent of Asian families had three or more earners, compared with 14 percent of non-Hispanic white families.[57]

The economic success of some minorities provides positive role models for minority youth as well as wider access to power and greater financial

Asians are more likely than other minorities—but less likely than whites—to own a business.

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resources for minority communities. However, this same success has convinced many Americans that racial discrimination no longer hinders the advancement of U.S. minorities. Within minority groups, the movement of some into the middle and upper class while a sizeable number remain in poverty strains minority group cohesion.

Accumulated Wealth

Incomes have increased for minorities, but minorities still lag far behind whites in terms of net savings or accumulated or inherited assets—their net wealth. Accumulated wealth is a critical dimension of economic status because it can cushion the impact of sudden health problems, unexpected unemployment, or other emergencies that strike families. It also helps pay college costs for children, or the down payment on a house.

The median net worth of whites is about 10 times that of blacks or Latinos.

The median net worth of whites is about 10 times that of blacks or Latinos (see Table 9). Differences in family structure account for some of this disparity. Specifically, non-Asian minorities have more female-headed households. In 1988, the median net wealth of all married-couple households ($57,100) was more than four times that of female-headed households ($13,600). However, the large wealth gap exists even for similar household types. Among married-couple households, the median wealth of whites (including Hispanics) is four to five times that of blacks or Hispanics. The median wealth of white female-headed households was $25,500 in 1988, more than 30 times that of black or Hispanic female-headed households—in part because a large share of white female householders are widows who are more likely to own a home or have other assets.

While data on the accumulated wealth of Asians and American Indians are not available, measures of homeownership and business ownership provide important clues to their assets.

Homeownership

Equity in a home is the largest single source of wealth for most Americans. Consequently, owning a home is an important determinant of economic well-being. While rates vary among groups, all minority groups have homeownership rates 14 to 25 percentage points below those of whites (including Hispanics). In 1990, 68 percent of white households owned homes. Just over half of American-Indian and Asian-American households owned homes in 1990, while just over 40 percent of Hispanic and black households owned a home.

Table 9

Median Net Worth of Households by Race and Ethnicity, 1988

	White	African American	Hispanic[a]
All households[b]	$44,400	$3,800	$5,500
Married-couple households	61,400	14,900	12,300
Female householders	25,500	700	500

[a] Hispanics may be of any race.
[b] Race/ethnicity is that of householder.
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports* P-70, no. 22 (1990).

Homeownership is surprisingly low among Asians and Pacific Islanders given their relatively high income levels. One reason for this apparent anomaly is the large share of recent Asian immigrants who may not have been here long enough to accumulate enough money for a down payment. Another factor is the concentration of Asians and Pacific Islanders in cities with the nation's most expensive housing. For example, about one-third of all Asians and Pacific Islanders reside in Los Angeles, New York, Honolulu, or San Francisco, where the median value of owner-occupied houses ranged from $209,000 to $332,400 in 1990—several times the national median home value of $79,100. Many middle-class Asians are priced out of the housing market in these cities.

Business Ownership

The rapid growth of the minority population and a surge in business activity within minority groups is changing the profile of U.S. business owners. The number of minority-owned firms grew by nearly half a million during the mid-1980s, increasing from 757,000 in 1982 to 1,222,000 in 1987. The minority share of all U.S. businesses rose from 6 to 9 percent over the same period.

The number of Hispanic-owned firms surged between 1982 and 1987, and now nearly equals the number owned by African Americans (see Table 10). These two minority groups own just over two-thirds of all minority-owned businesses; but Asians alone account for nearly 30 percent. Barely 2 percent of minority-owned firms are held by American Indians, Eskimos, or Aleuts.

Many Asian immigrants came to the United States specifically to take advantage of the business opportunities available here, and their overall business ownership rates are higher than those of other minorities. Asians owned 57 businesses for every 1,000 Asians in 1987, more than twice the rate among Hispanics, the next highest minority group. And the average income for Asian-owned firms ($93,000) was significantly higher than that of any other minority group. However, whites are still much more likely to start and own businesses. Their business ownership rate was 67 per 1,000 in 1987.

Some Asian groups surpass the white business ownership rates. By 1987, there was one Korean-owned business for every 10 Koreans (a rate of 102 per 1,000 population). This high rate reflects the selective migration of more-educated Koreans, and possibly a greater willingness among U.S. Koreans to pool resources to start or expand a business. Also, many immigrants begin their own businesses because they are excluded from promising jobs by limited English proficiency, lack of American educational credentials, or discrimination.[68]

Asian Indians (with 76 businesses per 1,000 population), Japanese (66 businesses per 1,000), and Chinese (63 businesses per 1,000) are other Asian groups well represented in the business community. Hawaiians and Filipinos, on the other hand, are much less likely than the other major Asian groups to own businesses.

Among Hispanics, Cubans have by far the highest business-ownership rate. Cubans own 63 businesses for every 1,000 Cubans—more than three times as many as Mexicans, and nearly six times as many as Puerto Ricans. Many Cuban immigrants were professionals or business owners before leaving Cuba, and they are heavily concentrated in southern Florida, which provides a solid base of Hispanic consumers. Over three-fourths of all Cuban businesses are in the Miami area, and many rely on a predominantly Cuban clientele.

Poverty, Welfare, and the Underclass

While many minority-group members have achieved economic success and affluence, poverty rates for each minority group are higher than that of whites. The percentage of blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians in poverty is about three times that of non-Hispanic whites. Even Asian Americans, who have a higher average income than non-Hispanic whites, are more likely to live in families with incomes below the poverty line established by the federal Office of Management and Budget—$13,924 for a family of four in 1991.

Table 10

Business Ownership Among Minorities, 1982 and 1987

	Number of firms (in 1,000s)		Firms per 1,000 population*	
	1982	1987	1982	1987
African American	308	424	11	15
Hispanic	234	422	14	21
Cuban	35	61	41	63
Other Hispanic	50	104	14	23
Mexican	135	230	14	19
Puerto Rican	14	28	6	11
Asian/Pacific Islander	201	355	46	57
Korean	31	69	68	102
Asian Indian	24	52	66	76
Japanese	44	53	59	66
Chinese	49	90	49	63
Vietnamese	5	26	15	49
Filipino	23	40	26	33
Hawaiian	3	4	17	22
American Indian/ Alaska Native	14	21	9	14
Aleut	1	1	59	54
Eskimo	2	2	37	44
American Indian	11	18	7	10

Note: Hispanics may be of any race.

* Author's estimates based on total population figures derived by interpolating the 1980 and 1990 census figures.

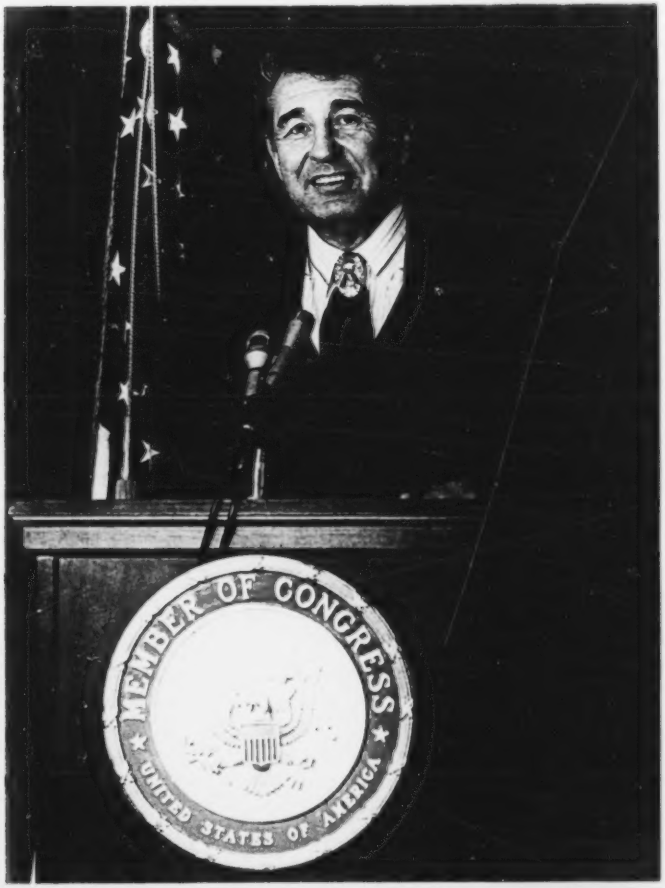
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Survey of Minority-Owned Business Enterprises*, various volumes.

Table 11

Poverty and Welfare Receipt by Race and Ethnicity, 1991

	Non-Hispanic				
	White	African American	Asian[a]	American Indian[b]	Hispanic
Percent in poverty	9	33	14	32	29
Percent in deep poverty[c]	3	16	7	14	10
Percent receiving welfare	13	47	19	51	44
Percent of poor receiving welfare	61	85	62	87	79
Numbers (in 1,000s)	188,667	30,758	7,065	1,730	22,039

[a] Includes Pacific Islanders.
[b] Includes Eskimos and Aleuts.
[c] Below 50% of the official poverty threshold.
[d] Weighted sample.
Source: Author's analysis of the March 1992 Current Population Survey



Office of Senator Campbell

Ben Nighthorse Campbell served as a U.S. Congressman from Colorado from 1987 to 1992, when he was elected to the U.S. Senate.

Further, minorities are over-represented among the poorest of the poor—those with incomes below 50 percent of the official poverty threshold (see Table 11). More than half (54 percent) of those in "deep poverty" are minorities.

The lower average educational attainment of minorities explains only part of their greater poverty. Poverty rates are higher among minorities than non-Hispanic whites at every level of educational attainment. For example, among high school dropouts, the poverty rate for blacks (49 percent) is still nearly twice that of non-Hispanic whites (25 percent). Latinos and Indians with less than a high school diploma also have much higher poverty rates than comparably educated non-Hispanic whites or Asians. Among college graduates, the poverty rates for blacks, Latinos, and Native Americans are nearly three times that of non-Hispanic whites. Even among Asians, the poverty rate for college graduates is twice that of non-Hispanic whites.

Minorities in poverty make use of welfare programs at a higher rate than poor non-Hispanic whites. Overall, three-fourths of America's poor received some type of government assistance in 1991,[9] while more than eight in ten poor blacks and American Indians received welfare benefits. Over three-fourths (79 percent) of poor Hispanics and almost two-thirds of poor Asians received welfare, while 61 percent of poor non-Hispanic whites received welfare in 1991.

The relatively high reliance on welfare among blacks, Latinos, and Native Americans may reflect a lack of savings, credit, home equity, or other assets that can ease people through spells of poverty. Also, minorities are more likely to be in deep poverty, and to remain poor for longer periods than whites. Welfare use among Hispanics and Asians may be tempered by the large share of immigrants who may not be familiar with welfare programs. Also, cultural norms deter some groups from seeking government assistance.

The Underclass

Social scientists have long attempted to define and understand the disadvan-

taged population groups that persistently remain outside mainstream U.S. society. In the 1980s, the terms "underclass" and "truly disadvantaged" were often used to describe these individuals. Experts disagree about exactly which characteristics identify the underclass, or even whether the term should be used at all. But most agree that racial and ethnic minorities, in particular blacks and Hispanics, comprise a major part of this group.[70] The development of the underclass has been linked to the long history of racial oppression in the United States.

According to one set of criteria, an individual of any race might be counted as part of the underclass population if he or she:

1) Has an income below 125 percent of the federal poverty line;
2) Failed to complete high school;
3) Receives public assistance; and
4) If female, is a never married mother; or if male, lacks attachment to the labor force (that is, the long-term underemployed).[71]

Nonwhite minorities and Hispanics make up 62 percent of this disadvantaged group. Among minorities, the share of blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans in the underclass is significantly higher than that of Asians or non-Hispanic whites. Despite wide coverage in the media, the underclass is a small share of all racial and ethnic groups. About 6 percent of black, American-Indian and Hispanic adults ages 19 to 64 have all the underclass characteristics cited above. Less than one-half the minority adults in poverty in 1992 could be considered members of the underclass.

Table 12

Voting Patterns of Minorities in the 1992 Presidential Election

	Percent of voters who supported		
	Bill Clinton	George Bush	Ross Perot
African American	80	11	7
Hispanic	62	24	14
Asian/Pacific Islander	32	52	17

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding, or because a small percentage of voters supported other candidates.

Source: Milton Morris, *African Americans and the Making of the Clinton Victory* (Washington, DC: Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, 1992) table 3.

Political Participation

The rapid growth of minorities during the 1980s increased their political clout. In particular, a combination of protracted residential segregation, a strong Voting Rights Act, and good political organization created a surge of new minority-majority districts when congressional districts were redrawn following the 1990 Census.[72] As a result, the November 1992 election brought an unusually high number of minorities into the U.S. Congress.[73] The number of African Americans in Congress increased from 26 to 40; the number of Hispanics from 14 to 19, the number of Asians and Pacific Islanders, from 6 to 8. Ben Nighthorse Campbell (Democrat—Colorado) became the first American Indian elected to the U.S. Senate in over 60 years. There were a number of other firsts for minority politicians: the first black woman elected to the Senate (Carol Moseley-Braun, Democrat—Illinois); the first Puerto Rican woman elected to Congress (Nydia Velazquez, Democrat—New York), and the first Korean elected to Congress (Jay Kim, Republican—California).

Minority voters are also an important factor in national elections. While minority votes are sought by both major political parties, African Americans and most Hispanic groups have tended to support Democratic candidates, while Asians and Pacific Islanders have more variable partisan preferences. In the 1992 presidential race, African-American voters overwhelmingly supported Bill Clinton (see Table 12). Most Hispanic voters also favored the Democratic candidate, while a slim majority of Asians' votes went for Republican candidate George Bush. A notable percentage of Hispanics and Asians also supported independent candidate Ross Perot.

Despite the recent increase in the number and visibility of minority politicians, minorities are still under-

represented among elected officials. A 1987 survey by the Census Bureau found that less than 4 percent of local elected officials were black, Hispanic, Asian, or Native American. African Americans were 2 percent of all local elected officials, Hispanics were 1 percent, American Indians and Alaska Natives were 0.4 percent, and Asians/Pacific Islanders were only 0.1 percent of all elected local officials.[74]

There are three reasons why the political strength of minorities still falls short of what their total population size would suggest. First, the younger age structure of minorities means that a smaller share of the minority population is of voting age; an even smaller share is over age 50, the age when people are most likely to vote. Second, the large number of immigrants among minorities means that many are not citizens and therefore are ineligible to vote. Finally, minorities have generally lower socioeconomic status, and individuals with low incomes and educational levels are less likely to register and vote than are more affluent and better educated individuals.[75]

Renewed pride in their American Indian heritage may prompt more Americans to identify themselves as Indians.

While minorities make up 25 percent of the total population, they comprise only 18 percent of the citizen voting-age population. In the November 1990 elections, minorities accounted for 15 percent of those who actually voted.

While the minority vote has a relatively small effect on national elections, the geographic concentration of specific minority groups can sway local elections and enhance the chances of electing a minority to office. The ability of minorities to translate their growing numbers into political power was also enhanced by the Federal Voting Rights Act, especially after it was extended in 1982. For example, the number of African-American elected officials jumped from 4,912 in 1980 to 7,335 in 1989.[76]

The rapid growth and close proximity of minority groups within cities occasionally pits one minority group against another. This was evident during the redistricting process following the 1990 Census. On the other hand, members of different minority groups within a jurisdiction can build effective coalitions that can control the outcome of elections when no single minority represents most voters. The election of Harold Washington, an African American, as mayor of Chicago in 1983 was based on a coalition of black and Hispanic voters.

Some analysts believe, however, that clustering minorities into one district only exacerbates the isolation of minorities from mainstream whites and hinders integration in the long-run. Analyst Linda Chavez argues, for example, that "The history of Hispanic involvement with the Voting Rights Act is a clear example of short-term gains purchased at the expense of long-range achievement."[77]

As minority populations continue to grow and recent immigrants become naturalized, minorities will have a larger voice in politics. The geographic concentration of minorities will enhance their political strength, especially in large cities where non-Hispanic whites are no longer a majority. The number of cities of 50,000 or more residents in which non-Hispanic whites are a minority increased from 58 in 1980 to 100 in

1990. Accordingly, the number of cities in which minorities control the electoral outcome should increase. In 1992, according to the U.S. Conference of Mayors, minorities represented nearly a third of the mayors of cities with populations of 500,000 or more. To the extent that minorities identify shared concerns, and join forces to do something about them, the growing numbers will make minorities a formidable political force.

Minorities in Society

Until relatively recently, minority and majority Americans came into contact with one another in a few places and in limited ways. While legal segregation was struck down nearly 30 years ago, making schools and work places more integrated, social events and other aspects of Americans' private lives have continued along largely separate tracks. As a result, minorities often adapted to majority norms at school and work, while the majority population changed little. However, the growth of America's minorities, along with increasing socioeconomic success for many segments of the minority population, have created a situation in which minority preferences and activities are beginning to influence the majority population.

One obvious example of this change is in food preferences. Until recently, most non-Hispanic whites made a distinction between "American" and "ethnic" food, and encountered the latter only in "ethnic" restaurants. More recently, however, "New American" cuisines have gained popularity, blending traditional American dishes with ingredients and cooking techniques from minority cuisines. According to businesses that track Americans' food purchases, salsa has even replaced catsup as Americans' dominant condiment.

Until recent decades, minorities were almost invisible in movies and particularly in television—America's favorite leisure activity. Minority activists fought media stereotyping and overt discrimination eased. But the sheer growth in the nation's minority population has forced the media to become more inclusive. According to data from A.C. Nielsen, the company that monitors television viewing, many minorities have higher viewership rates than non-Hispanic whites. The need for advertisers to reach these growing consumer populations has changed television fare for all viewers. Instead of a token black in a major TV series, like Bill Cosby in the "I Spy" series of the 1960s, viewers of all races and ethnic groups made the all-black Bill Cosby family show of the late 1980s a national favorite. The TV landscape now features several programs addressed specifically at minority audiences. Moreover, the rise of cable television has made the creation of whole networks aimed at specific minority audiences economically feasible. The number of magazines and other print media serving minorities is also expanding.

Changes in the nation's school curriculum are another example of the way the growth in the minority population is transforming the assimilation process from a one-way to a two-way street, one where the majority has to make adjustments too. Many people are concerned that shifting the curriculum from one based on European history and culture to one that includes the history and literature of all the world's peoples will weaken students' education.[78] Others hold that a broader understanding will benefit all students, especially as they prepare for employment in an economy in which global competition touches more American industries.

Summary: New Directions for America's Minorities

The traditional image of racial and ethnic minorities in U.S. society is shifting. The relatively young age structure, high birth rates, and heavy immigration flows of minorities will continue to make the U.S. population more racially and ethnically diverse. Minorities will increasingly shape our national character, adding racial and cultural diversity to schools, work places, and legislatures.

Shifting immigration patterns are injecting more diversity into individual racial and ethnic groups and eroding

the numerical dominance of African Americans in the minority population. The U.S. Hispanic population includes more Central Americans now than in the 1970s, for example, while the 1980s brought impoverished refugees along with wealthy, college-educated professionals into the Asian-American population. This diversity is disrupting the status quo in many of our largest cities. At times it contributes to racial tensions that erupt in violence.

Minorities are still overrepresented among America's poor, but minority status is no longer synonymous with poverty. A growing segment of minorities are achieving affluence within mainstream society. All these changes are challenging traditional views about minorities that underlie public policies and government programs. One persistent belief has been that minorities will eventually blend into America's cultural melting pot. This was the experience of the European immigrants who came to America in the 19th and early 20th centuries, and were absorbed into the broader society within a few generations of arrival.

Another view holds that pervasive racism and other factors have excluded minorities, in particular African Americans and American Indians, from full participation in American society. Without intervention to insure their civil rights and affirmative action in education and employment, a disproportionate share of minorities will remain stuck on the bottom rungs of the economic ladder.

Neither conceptual model fits today's minority groups. While many new immigrants seem to be following the assimilation path of European immigrants nearly a century ago, many blacks, American Indians, and Latinos—long-time Americans—remain undereducated, underemployed, and in poverty. On the other hand, the achievements of some minorities indicate that minority status alone need not thwart advancement. An alternative future may be a more pluralistic or multicultural America, in which minorities participate fully in all aspects of society while maintaining their racial and ethnic identities—forming a cultural mosaic or kaleidoscope.

Both the growing racial diversity of Americans and divergent economic paths followed by minorities call into question many government policies. Is providing aid solely on the basis of race or ethnicity unnecessary or unwise given the growing affluence of some minorities? Was this affluence possible only because of special government loans, scholarships, or other affirmative action programs? Recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions regarding civil rights in employment and minority business set-aside programs may reflect a growing tendency to end racially-specific policies that were set in place to help minorities.

As we move into the 21st century, government at all levels will be grappling with the new realities of America's minority population. The complexity and diversity of today's minority population will need to be recognized as we reconsider existing public policies and formulate new ones. Given the broader context of intensifying majority/minority conflicts around the world, successful policymaking in this arena will offer the United States another avenue for global leadership.

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Discussion Questions

1. What are the major racial and ethnic population groups for which the U.S. government collects data? What are some of the problems associated with collecting these data? What changes would you make in collecting data for racial and ethnic groups in the future?

2. What provisions of past and present immigration laws are reflected in the racial and ethnic composition of immigrants to the United States?

3. Discuss the major causes of death for each racial and ethnic group. How and why do they differ?

4. Discuss the short- and long-term implications of the differences in the age structures of U.S. minorities and non-Hispanic whites.

5. Speculate about the future spatial distribution of minorities within the United States. Which regions or states will be most affected? How will the racial and ethnic composition of suburbs and cities change?

6. The author outlines three factors that explain income disparities—education, region of residence, and family structure. To what degree do these factors explain the differences? What other factors play a role?

7. Discuss the business-ownership patterns of minority Americans. What do you think are the underlying factors leading to these patterns?

8. Consider how projected changes in the minority population may affect political power and, therefore, legislative actions.

9. The "melting pot" is a term that has often been used to describe the process through which minorities assimilate into America's culture. You may have also heard the metaphors "mosaic," "salad bowl," or "stew" used to describe the U.S. population. Which of these metaphors do you think best describes the United States? Are there other terms that would be more appropriate or descriptive? Explain.

Prepared by Kimberly A. Crews

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